

**Youth and Therapeutic Insurgency in Eastern Congo:  
An Ethnographic History of Ruga-Ruga, Simba, and Mai-Mai Movements, 1870 - Present**

by

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**Dedication**

For my sons.

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## Abstract

This is an ethnographic history of child soldiering in the eastern regions of the Democratic Republic of Congo. It focuses on deployments of *mai* (Swahili: “water”) medicines and charms during periods of intergenerational conflict from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present. Why do recurring insurgencies invoke the discourses and practices of these particular medicines, wielded primarily by the young? At the heart of this question lie the antecedents, events, and afterlives of the 1964 Simba Rebellion: likely the most massive mobilization of child soldiers in post-colonial Africa. The Simba’s roots are traced through *ruga-ruga* movements in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, *Anioto* leopard-men violence in the Belgian Congo, and carceral sites like the National Penitentiary for Delinquent Youth at Niangara in the late colonial era. The dissertation concludes by examining the proliferation of *mai-mai* movements in contemporary eastern Congo and the international development industry that seeks to manage the violence of these young warriors. Working across time and scale, from a microhistory of an individual child combatant to deeper regional histories of generational dynamics, the focus remains on links between violent children, war charms and medicines, and forms and practices of adult authority. The study invigorates contemporary analyses of child soldiering by foregrounding temporally deep, emic interpretations of links between age, violence, medicine, and immaturity. It builds arguments from a broad array of evidence, including oral interviews, vernacular narratives such as the Mwindo Epic, mission archives, periodicals, and colonial security archives. The geographical focus is on the northern parts of what is now North Kivu province.

## Chapter One: Introduction

This dissertation traces an entangled history of violent youth, insurgency, and intergenerational conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present. At the heart of the study are the antecedents, events, and afterlives of the 1964 Simba Rebellion. This was likely the most massive mobilization of children in conflict in post-colonial Africa and the most successful insurrection in Congo prior to the First Congo War in 1996. From ferocious beginnings in mid-1964, borne forth by thousands of young people fortified with *mai*<sup>1</sup> war medicine, the rebels controlled—at peak—over half of Congo. By the end of 1964, however, the movement was crushed. International mercenary reinforcements to the *Armée Nationale Congolaise* (ANC) halted the Simba’s explosive expansion from June through late October. During the five months of Simba rule, insurgents purged customary, religious, and economic elites, foreigners, and government forces in eastern and central Congo. Despite its brevity, and the maelstrom of concurrent crises throughout Congo, the intensity of the Simba Rebellion made it a “defining chronological marker” in the life histories of those who experienced it.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Mai* is, in Congolese Kiswahili dialect, the word for “water,” which is *maji* in standard Kiswahili. This dissertation will use the term “*mai*” to describe the medicine, and “*mai-mai*” to describe the insurgent movements predicated on the medicine. This reflects norms of usage at work in eastern Congo during the period of research. *Mai* is alternatively spelled as “*mayi*” in other scholarship.

<sup>2</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo* (Duke University Press, 1999), p 248.

Memories of the time are vivid, sometimes ghastly. Simba rule was marked by what Benoit Verhaegen called “violence and terrorism.”<sup>3</sup> While reclaiming territory in 1964 from the rebels, government forces proved keen to retaliate. One anecdote, recounted to a journalist in November 1964, stands out. Witnesses claimed a chief—himself captured, imprisoned, and tortured by the rebels during their ascendancy—dragged an imprisoned Simba in front of the village after “liberation.” “While everybody watched, the chief carved out a piece of meat from [the rebel’s] side and drank blood from it.... Their chief said the best meat is the fingers of small children. They all roared, laughing.”<sup>4</sup>

The account is grotesque and complex.<sup>5</sup> The soldier may have been a child—placed in a category of “small children” by the chief. The tale’s “eruption of laughter,” performance of cutting flesh and consuming blood from a living body, and further cannibal threat reverberate with cliché and cannibal tropes.<sup>6</sup> The account, whatever its veracity, raises a number of interpretive quandaries and analytical dilemmas. Why would an authority figure claim to savor children’s flesh? Despite the laughter, this cannot be read as simply tongue-in-cheek; it was far from a ribald joke told in the glow of nighttime fires for the benefit of peers. The chief reportedly spoke with blood in the mouth, as if to bring credence to dubious claims. The village population served witness to the macabre performance, staged for them as a constituency. Combining threat,

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<sup>3</sup> Benoît. Verhaegen, “Les Rebellions Populaires au Congo en 1964,” *Cahiers D’etudes Africaines* 7, no. 26 (1967): 355.

<sup>4</sup> Andrew Borowiec, “City of Death: Horror Shadow Lies Across Stanleyville Terror Casts Red Shadow in Stanleyville,” *Los Angeles Times; Los Angeles, Calif.*, November 26, 1964, p 8.

<sup>5</sup> We can question the reliability of the source of this story and acknowledge mediation. That said, its very clichéd nature suggests the register of genre. It is worth examining why such claims emerged in the aftermath of the rebellion.

<sup>6</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt, “An Acoustic Register, Tenacious Images, and Congolese Scenes of Rape and Repetition,” *Cultural Anthropology* 23, no. 2 (May 1, 2008): 223, on “eruptive laughter” in discourse around violence in Congo. One the consumption of blood see Luise White, *Speaking With Vampires: Rumor and History in East and Central Africa* (University of California Press, 2000); Luise White, “Blood Brotherhood Revisited: Kinship, Relationship, and the Body in East and Central Africa,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 64, no. 3 (1994): 359–72.

joke, argument, and anathema violence, the chief's act of consumption was a warning: it suggested the fate of all those who sought to undo and recreate the forms, figures, and modalities of authority.

The act specifically targeted wayward youth. Those whose "meat" was "best." Emerging from a time of rule by the young—a framing of the rebellion this dissertation will present—during the Simba era, the performance marked a full reversion to gerontocratic order. The chief demonstrated the extent to which those forces were willing to go to preserve their reclaimed power. No longer would the young spill the blood of elders. Once again, the lives and labor of youth would be under literal and metaphorical hands of male elders: kin, priests, chiefs, teachers, business elites, and state officials.

And yet the words of a key figure in the tale do not enter the record. The rebel, though captured, cut, and consumed, gives no rejoinder. His body served as an object lesson, but the age, condition, motives, and intentions of this Simba were unaccounted for. This dissertation attempts to provide such an accounting, not of his particular story, nor a representation of his voice, but of the deep histories and trajectories that compelled figures like this young man to join a movement that would cost many their lives.<sup>7</sup> It also seeks to interpret the actions of authority figures, like the chief, whose unbound violence against young people begs explanation. What justified such deeply anti-sociality? What manner of threat did elder men perceive in "small children" to justify acts of erasure and vicious displays of power? This study approaches and interprets the forms of violence that shaped the era under study.

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<sup>7</sup> Luise S. White, Stephan F. Miescher, and David William Cohen, *African Words, African Voices: Critical Practices in Oral History* (Indiana University Press, 2001).

Fragmented stories like the one recorded above provide the evidentiary grist of this dissertation. Accounts are culled from newspapers, interviews, personal communications, and archival sources. Among these recollections sits, however awkwardly and partially, my own. I first traveled to the site that is the focus of this project, northern North Kivu in eastern Congo, in June 2003, during the tailing months of the Second Congo War.<sup>8</sup> My experiences during that time ultimately generated the perplexities that came to animate the lines of inquiry of this dissertation. My journey was to Beni, a town of about 200,000 at the crossroads of the national north-south and east-west roadways of northeast Congo. It was and remains a strategic town. Occupying the city enables control over the movement of people and goods throughout the region. At the time of my arrival, Beni was occupied by militia allied with the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie – Kisangani Mouvement de Libération* (RCD-KML) a rebel government purportedly protecting the interests of the predominant Kinande-speaking communities of northern North Kivu.<sup>9</sup> The mood in town was tense, the population deeply wearied from enduring six years of cataclysmic violence. The sounds of fighting were woven into the tapestry of life in the city.

Militia were in constant motion. Unmarked Mitsubishi Canter trucks, laden with ununiformed warriors, rumbled through town at all hours. The rattle and growl of the improvised troop transport's diesel engines would mix incongruously with the pure, high tones of garrulous singing from the soldiers, crammed together in open-air trucks. Most remarkable to me: many of

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<sup>8</sup> Jason K. Stearns, *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa* (PublicAffairs, 2011). Stearns account remains the most detailed, comprehensive scholarly narration of the period.

<sup>9</sup> Judith Verweijen, "Pompier-Pyromanocracy: Mbusa Nyamwisi and the DR Congo's Inflammable Post-Settlement Political Order," in *Warlord Democrats in Africa: Ex-Military Leaders and Electoral Politics*, by A Themnér (London: Zed Books, 2017), 41–67. Verweijen translates the movement's name as "Rally for Democracy/Kisangani-Liberation Movement."

the occupants of these vehicles looked like children. Their small bodies were mostly hidden behind the aprons of the truck beds. Rows of shoulders and heads peaked over the metal sides. None seemed to be carrying guns.

I was mystified. Were these children warriors? If so, why were they, of all people, being mobilized to fight? Where were their weapons? I would crane my neck to follow their movement until out of sight, wisps of melody from their songs burned into memory. My traveling colleagues explained, in response to my repeated questions, that these were *mai-mai*, as though the appellation itself explained all.

A South African photojournalist, Guy Tillim, traveled to Beni near the same period. He was intrigued by these same figures. Tillim captured a series of portraits at a “*mai-mai* training camp.” Black and white, composed in medium close up, his prints portray boys in drab clothing, holding thick sticks, heads and waists wrapped in grasses and leaves. The images are striking. Newspapers like London’s *Telegraph* reprinted the photographs with their own commentary: “He should be in school, or out playing football with his friends. Instead, he is one of the many thousands of children sucked into the vortex of a bloody civil war that has raged across the vast expanse of the Democratic Republic of Congo since the late 1990s. The conflict, which has claimed an estimated 3.8 million lives, has spawned scores of rebel armies and militias - but none more tragic than the child soldiers of the Mai-Mai who believe they are immune to combat death because of their magical ability to repel bullets.”<sup>10</sup>

These words ring like an echo of others, published nearly forty years prior, on November 28, 1964, during the waning days of the Simba rebellion by a Canadian journalist named

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<sup>10</sup> Derek Bishton, “Viewfinder: Mai-Mai Militia Training, Democratic Republic of Congo,” *The Daily Telegraph*, August 5, 2005, sec. Culture.

Frederick Nossal. As the rebel movement died, Nossal argued it “failed for it had no direction and no real aim... Using a hodgepodge of Marx, Lenin, Mao, African tribal tradition and black magic, the Congo rebels this year again burst across the countryside—adding more confusion to the highly complicated and cluttered political scene in the country.”<sup>11</sup> Here, as in the *Telegraph*’s commentary on Tillim’s images, the analysis foregrounded incoherence, perplexity, magic, and the senseless waste of young lives to anchor interpretations of *mai-mai* movements in eastern Congo. Much scholarship on *mai-mai* clings stubbornly to these analytical tropes.

Neither this manner of scholarship, nor the *Telegraph*, nor Nossal’s interpretations capture the deep ambivalence present in Tillim’s portraits. The *mai-mai* featured in these images are, inarguably and preponderantly, young men—even boys. Their faces are impassive and postures purposeful. They do not present themselves, nor are they posed, as victims. They are not depicted alongside or among the adults reportedly co-opting their childhoods for shadowy political ends. They are figured as I recall them: simultaneously powerful and vulnerable.

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<sup>11</sup> Frederick Nossal, “Focus on the Congo: Rebels Believe in Mao and Magic,” *The Globe and Mail*; Toronto, Ont., November 28, 1964.



Figure 1.1 “Mai Mai Training Camp” Guy Tillim’s portraits of *mai-mai* in a “training camp” in Beni in 2003. Tillim photographed at least thirty-one militia members in Beni. He posed these figures either staring directly at the camera or in three-quarters address. One print in the series is now in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York city.

From itineraries and provocations spurred by my memories and accounts and renditions like those described above, this dissertation sketches a deep history of links between power and vulnerability in eastern Congo for over one hundred years. It examines the recurrent emergence of *mai-mai*-like figures and movements throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the eastern Great Lakes region. It connects the events of 1964 with those occurring in places like Beni at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and in earlier periods, by grounding the analysis in interpretations of the *mai* medicine and its “therapeutic procedures,”<sup>12</sup> as well as the debates *mai* indexed, notably contestations over obligation, reciprocity, class, and intergenerational conflict. It questions

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<sup>12</sup> White, *Speaking With Vampires*, 50.



monolithic narratives that position adults coercing young people, using magic, and stirring ideological confusion. It stands in contrast to much contemporary and historical analyses of the *mai-mai* groups in eastern Congo.<sup>13</sup> The study follows a number of threads, persistent images, and enduring narratives, including the visual hook of African children in battle posture, as in Tillim's portraits, that were produced for consumption by audiences in the global North since at least 1872. This dissertation will argue that tracing the logic of *mai*, and the debates, ideas, and representations its use sought to address and settle, opens up interpretive possibilities for more robust understandings of both the Simba Rebellion and contemporary *mai-mai* movements in eastern Congo.

The dissertation engages with three domains of scholarship. First, it draws on histories of medicine and healing in sub-Saharan Africa—arguing that *mai-mai* movements can best be understood via a deep examination of the origins and workings of the *mai* medicine.<sup>14</sup> Second, it argues that framing *mai-mai* movements as youthful therapeutic insurgencies alters how we interpret histories of the social category of youth in colonial and post-colonial eastern Congo.<sup>15</sup> Third, it argues that *mai-mai* insurgencies, propelled by youth, ultimately called into question the

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<sup>13</sup> Catherine. Coquery-Vidrovitch, Alain. Forest, and Herbert. Weiss, *Rébellions-Révolution Au Zaïre, 1963-1965*, Racines Du Présent (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1987); Verhaegen, "Les Rébellions Populaires Au Congo En 1964"; Benoît. Verhaegen, *Rebellions Au Congo*, Études Du C.R.I.S.P. (Bruxelles: Centre de recherche et d'information socio-politiques, 1966); Renée Claire Fox, Willy De Craemer, and J. M. Ribeaucourt, "*The Second Independence*": *A Case Study of the Kwilu Rebellion in the Congo* (Mouton & Co., 1965); Ludo. Martens, *Pierre Mulele, Ou, La Seconde Vie de Patrice Lumumba*, EPO Dossier International (Berchem (Anvers) : Bruxelles: Editions EPO ; distribution, Editions Vie Ouvrière, 1985); Ken McMillan, "1964 Remembered: The Congo Simba Rebellion, Then and Now," *4 Corners: Magazine of UFM Worldwide*, 2014; Emizet F. Kisangani, *Civil Wars in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 1960-2010* (Boulder, Colo. ; London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012); Kiangu Sindani, "Pierre Mulele, Martyr Ou Traître? Les Langages de La Mémoire," *Likundoli : Enquêtes D'histoire Congolaise* 10, no. 1–2 (2006).

<sup>14</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Nervous State: Violence, Remedies, and Reverie in Colonial Congo* (Duke University Press, 2016).

<sup>15</sup> Ch Didier Gondola, "Makers and Breakers: Children and Youth in Postcolonial Africa (Review)," *African Studies Review* 50, no. 1 (April 25, 2007): p 188.

legitimacy of postcolonial vernacular authority, building on debates that ground recurrent intergenerational and interclass conflicts in eastern Congo through the present day.

## War Medicine

This dissertation interprets *mai* talk and practices as neither a ruse to dupe naïve youth, nor a confused mélange of Marx and magic, but rather an enduring *war medicine*.<sup>16</sup> Medicines, David Schoenbrun argues, in Great Lakes Africa are best understood as “substances with powers to transform bodies” that require both speech and “actions of persons and collectivities” to gain efficacy.<sup>17</sup> To borrow Wyatt MacGaffey’s description of *nkisi* objects: medicines are “things that do things.” Medicines are simultaneously social and material objects. Individually imbibed yet constituted by and within community, medicines function within kin networks, language groups, and other social aggregations.<sup>18</sup> It is to deployments of one war medicine, *mai*, along boundaries of bodies and polities that this dissertation focuses.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> This approach differs somewhat from that of Danny Hoffman who in the “Magic of War” chapter of *The War Machines: Young Men and Violence in Sierra Leone and Liberia* (Duke University Press, 2011), describes a similar regime of “bullet-proofing” in Liberia. Hoffman approaches the process as a form of “occult” action. He challenges the negative framing of occult force and argues for its “inventive” capacities. I share his view of the ambivalence of the *mai* but see it fundamentally as a creative, productive force with harming qualities. Medicine suits such an approach more than notions of “occult,” or “magic” power.

<sup>17</sup> David L. Schoenbrun, “Conjuring the modern in Africa: Durability and Rupture in Histories of Public Healing between the Great Lakes of East Africa,” *The American Historical Review* 111, no. 5 (December 1, 2006): 1418. He links medicines to healing, writing that “public healing has wrestled with shifting boundaries between a porous social body’s moral communities and the starker outline of an embodied, autonomous individual.””

<sup>18</sup> Randall M. Packard, *Chiefship and Cosmology: An Historical Study of Political Competition* (Indiana University Press, 1981). Packard, following Steven Feierman’s studies of Shambaa chiefship, focuses on the role of the chief in “healing” and “harming” the land—as the ultimate healing talisman within a clan group.

<sup>19</sup> In “Conjuring the modern in Africa” Schoenbrun further suggests that, though “flawed and freighted, the history of public healing emphasizes the discourses and practices that people have used in the boundary crossing struggle over the conceptual and moral bases of political and social organization.” Defining the stakes, limits, and elements of this struggle is a core focus of this dissertation.

This dissertation's interpretations of *mai* medicine touch on genealogies of public healing in Africanist scholarship.<sup>20</sup> From earlier roots<sup>21</sup> public healing emerged in the 1980s as innovative interdisciplinary methods were brought to bear on enduring healing discourses and practices in Africa.<sup>22</sup> The goal was to break free from the “encapsulated or bracketed” positioning of healing in previous scholarship. Steven Feierman and John Janzen forged foundational lines of inquiry by exploring the “social basis” or “social roots” of therapies contra individuated “private healing” practices.<sup>23</sup> Feierman sought to link healing practices to “fundamental institutions” in African communities and connect them to “larger historical narratives,” showing them to be integrated and coherent, despite the impact of disruptive colonial legal interventions.<sup>24</sup> He argued that healing work should not be framed as religious practice, but rather as part of “therapeutic movements with political and remedial dimensions.”<sup>25</sup> Healing movements and political authority were cast as deeply, even inextricably, connected—even as

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<sup>20</sup> A comprehensive, evocative overview of this literature is found in Nancy Rose Hunt's contribution: “Health and Healing” to the *The Oxford Handbook of Modern African History*, 2013. Hunt delves into the roots of this scholarship in early ethnography through emerging trends in the historiography on healing in Africa.

<sup>21</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt points out the significance of a 1976 study by W. De Craemer, Renee C Fox, and Jan Vansina, (“Religious Movements in Central Africa: A Theoretical Study,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 18, no. 4: 458–475) in helping to shape the foundations of this scholarship in *A Nervous State*, p 12.

<sup>22</sup> Here scholars like Steven Feierman and David William Cohen, trained in both anthropological and historical methods paved the way with ground breaking work. Victoria E. Bonnell et al., *Beyond the Cultural Turn New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*, Studies on the History of Society and Culture ;34 (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1999), p 19.

<sup>23</sup> Steven Feierman and John M. Janzen, *The Social Basis of Health and Healing in Africa* (University of California Press, 1992); John M. Janzen, *The Quest for Therapy in Lower Zaire* (University of California Press, 1982); Steven Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals: Anthropology and History in Tanzania* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990).

<sup>24</sup> Steven Feierman, “Colonizers, Scholars, and the Creation of Invisible Histories,” in *Beyond the Cultural Turn* (University of California Press, 1999) p 186. Feierman argues that the state outlawed public healing even as it permitted “private” healing. Public healing was seen by the state as an avenue for dissent and rebellion.

<sup>25</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt, “Health and Healing,” *The Oxford Handbook of Modern African History*, 2013 p 379.

they frequently operated in tension.<sup>26</sup> Exploring therapeutic dynamics, and points where the biomedical and other regimes interfaced with public healing practices generated field changing work on the region.<sup>27</sup> This scholarship inspired work on debility, the generative potential of illness, and careful studies of links between public health and witchcraft.<sup>28</sup> Looking at social, cultural, and political phenomena through the lens of healing enabled scholars to bring seemingly disparate, even contrary, practices together in productive ways.

Too tightly linking medicines like *mai* to work on public healing, however, misleads. *Mai* protects individual bodies and empowers its wielders but, crucially, towards ruinous ends. *Mai* warriors do not seek to heal, but rather to desolate their enemies. As we will see, their antagonists can be their own kith and kin. This medicine serves the violent desire to undo—evoking the “punitive... secret, negative, and harming” work of medicines war. *Mai* warriors sought to protect and renew their communities, but this is an example where, as Nancy Rose Hunt writes, “the protective achieves force through being brutal, harmful, ruinous.”<sup>29</sup> Here Hunt’s framing of *therapeutic insurgency* is useful. *Mai* was deeply destructive but also generative of forms of community. The medicine knit young warriors together with a shared power and common purpose. It empowered marginal figures *Mai* was a war medicine, not simply

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<sup>26</sup> Adam Ashforth, *Witchcraft, Violence, and Democracy in South Africa* (University of Chicago Press, 2005); Packard, *Chiefship and Cosmology*; Megan Vaughan, *Curing Their Ills: Colonial Power and African Illness* (Stanford University Press, 1991); Neil Kodesh, *Beyond the Royal Gaze: Clanship and Public Healing in Buganda* (University of Virginia Press, 2010).

<sup>27</sup> Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo*; Vaughan, *Curing Their Ills*.

<sup>28</sup> Julie Livingston, *Debility and the Moral Imagination in Botswana* (Indiana University Press, 2005); Julie Livingston, *Improvising Medicine: An African Oncology Ward in an Emerging Cancer Epidemic* (Duke University Press, 2012); Ashforth, *Witchcraft, Violence, and Democracy in South Africa*; Adam. Ashforth, *Madumo, a Man Bewitched* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

<sup>29</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Nervous State: Violence, Remedies, and Reverie in Colonial Congo* (Duke University Press, 2016), p 14.

a form of anti-social, occult practice.<sup>30</sup> Child warriors using *mai* responded to, were symptomatic of, and contributed to, social breakdown. At the same time, they were creative, generative agents drawing on deep reserves of language, meaning, and practice to channel and deploy novel forms of power. Pursuing the logic of the *mai* medicine orients focus toward the origins, rules, and targets of the movement, not merely to the demographic spectacle of its participants. Looking closely at movements inspired by *mai* medicine looks beyond the private victimization of individual soldiers to their public action. This is a vital move: child soldiers in eastern Congo wielding medicine are continually subject to interpretive encapsulation—the charm objects and tactics of contemporary *mai-mai*, as the Simba before them, threaten to be continually viewed as an egregiously dangerous version of “exotic local color.”<sup>31</sup> This study aims to bring interpretations of child soldiering in Congo back into engagement with deep historical discourses and practices around violence, maturity, and power.

This dissertation interprets *mai* in several forms: as a material, a set of practices, and a social logic animating certain persistent therapeutic insurgencies that recurred from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century through the present day in eastern Congo.<sup>32</sup> It attends to the political and social dynamics such movements sought to engage and, often, transform through destructive power. Tracing the logic of the *mai* medicine is central to understanding the nature and stakes of intergenerational struggle in eastern Congo’s 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Simba movement, I argue, cannot be understood in

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<sup>30</sup> See my comments on Danny Hoffman, *The War Machines: Young Men and Violence in Sierra Leone and Liberia* (Duke University Press, 2011) above.

<sup>31</sup> Feierman, “Colonizers, Scholars, and the Creation of Invisible Histories,” p 206.

<sup>32</sup> Indeed, while I construe it as a therapeutic insurgency, it is important to note that the *mai* was not simply generative of power. Violently attacking social affliction was a condition of possibility for healing to commence—just as *mai* demanded its wielder to engage in pure behaviors for efficacy, so too the social body was compromised by corrupt constituents and would founder. This is where the *mai* played its public role.

isolation from the “conceptual and moral bases of political organization” that ignited the desire for *mai* and motivated the sacrificial commitments of adherents.<sup>33</sup> The dissertation argues that *mai* was not a generic substance, able to be “taken” by anyone in need of its power. The medicine’s effects were sometimes muted or non-existent, the elements of its production disputed. *Mai* is a medicine, however, that was and is only deployable by a certain segment of society. In the case of *mai*, these figures belong to the profoundly complex and overdetermined category of youth.

### **Youth and Intergenerational Conflict**

The category of youth in Africa, John and Jean Comaroff argue, “stands for many things at once.”<sup>34</sup> The polyvalence of the concept threatens to reduce its analytical power even while imbuing it with great flexibility as in debate, disputation, and conversation in both scholarship and in the lived experience of African social worlds. While Didier Gondola once suggested the category of youth often served as a “theoretical and disciplinary contraption” recent studies reveal how broad and malleable the concept can be.<sup>35</sup> Emerging scholarship traces how youth

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<sup>33</sup> Schoenbrun, “Conjuring the Modern in Africa.”

<sup>34</sup> Alcinda Honwana and Filip De Boeck, eds., *Makers and Breakers: Children & Youth in Postcolonial Africa*. (Dakar, Senegal: CODESRIA, 2005).

<sup>35</sup> Ch Didier Gondola, “Makers and Breakers: Children and Youth in Postcolonial Africa (Review),” *African Studies Review* 50, no. 1 (April 25, 2007): p 188.

are creative and agentive, engaged in sartorial,<sup>36</sup> expressive,<sup>37</sup> consumptive,<sup>38</sup> and transnational economic projects.<sup>39</sup> Other studies, particularly when focused on the Great Lakes Region of central Africa, focus on youth violence as a form of agency: as part of militia movements,<sup>40</sup> fighting with or against the state,<sup>41</sup> or as the engines of supposedly ethnic conflict.<sup>42</sup> Little in either body of literature, however, attempts to locate the junction where the creative, generative aspects of young dynamism engage the violent, destabilizing actions of destructive youth. Even when violence is a primary analytical frame young people are cast simultaneously as victims of social breakdown and as key agents of instability—constituting a dangerous group of unmoored people “uncaptured” by the state. The struggle to bring the generative and destructive aspects of youth action into the same frame is an enduring one and comes from deep roots within the genealogy of scholarly thought on the subject.

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<sup>36</sup> Charles Didier Gondola, “Popular Music, Urban Society, and Changing Gender Relations in Kinshasa, Zaire (1950-1990),” *Gendered Encounters: Challenging Cultural Boundaries and Social Hierarchies in Africa*, 1997, 65–84.

<sup>37</sup> Nicolas Argenti, *The Intestines of the State: Youth, Violence, and Belated Histories in the Cameroon Grassfields* (University of Chicago Press, 2007); Filip De Boeck, Marie-Françoise Plissart, and Jean-Pierre Jacquemin, *Kinshasa: Récits de la ville invisible* (Renaissance Du Livre, 2005); Johannes Fabian, *Remembering the Present: Painting and Popular History in Zaire* (University of California Press, 1996); Bogumil Jewsiewicki, Jean-Claude Lefebvre, and Frieda Sewald, *Cheri Samba: The Hybridity of Art*, 1 (Galerie Amrad African Art Publications, 1995).

<sup>38</sup> Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (Polity, 2009).

<sup>39</sup> Janet MacGaffey, *Entrepreneurs and Parasites: The Struggle for Indigenous Capitalism in Zaire*, African Studies Series ;57 (Cambridge University Press, 1987); Janet MacGaffey and Rémy Bazenguissa-Ganga, *Congo-Paris: Transnational Traders on the Margins of the Law* (Indiana University Press, 2000).

<sup>40</sup> René Lemarchand, *The Dynamics of Violence in Central Africa* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); Gérard Prunier, *Africa’s World War: Congo, the Rwandan Genocide, and the Making of a Continental Catastrophe* (Oxford University Press, 2011); Stearns, *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters*.

<sup>41</sup> Jean Francois Bayart and Béatrice Hibou, *The Criminalization of the State in Africa* (International African Institute in association with James Currey, 1999); Laurent Fourchard and Simon Bekker, *Governing Cities in Africa* (HSRC Press, 2013).

<sup>42</sup> Stephen Jackson, “Sons of Which Soil? The Language and Politics of Autochthony in Eastern D.R. Congo,” *African Studies Review* 49, no. 2 (2006): 95–123; Mahmood Mamdani, “Preliminary Thoughts on the Congo Crisis,” *Social Text* 17, no. 3 (1999): 53–62; Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001).

Foundational scholarship on youth in Congo by scholars like Mary Douglas, Claude Meillassoux, and Jan Vansina focused attention on the role of lineage youth within frameworks of social reproduction, and as key sources of labor within the lineage modes of production. In eastern Congo, Robert Harms examined how upper Congo's Bobangi-speaking community was transformed with the rise of trading elites in the precolonial period. Individual elites accumulated durable personal wealth at the perceived expense of their young kin. The social dynamics Mary Douglas highlighted in case of the Lele—of instability produced by elites who greedily prevented juniors from advancing to social adulthood in order to maximize their labor—manifested itself in Bobangi communities, and intense fears about witchcraft violence, social disorder and burdensome obligations to kin pushed elites into repressive positions against Bobangi youth.<sup>43</sup> Youth, then, sought their revenge through flight or violence. Some attempted to wrest control out of the hands of avaricious elites. The powerful economic transformations that generated intergenerational violence in the precolonial milieu Harms studies find echoes in decolonizing eastern Congo in this dissertation.

But the concept of youth can become unwieldy—unhelpfully capacious or too narrowly defined and functionalized. Scholarship focusing on intergenerational conflict and exploitation misses much about the process of being young, including how young people sought to construct their selves, and young men forged masculine identities on their own terms. Failing to track such processes risks simply adopting the perspective of powerful social figures within African communities—seeing youth as a social problem to manage. Some young men refused to adhere

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<sup>43</sup> In *Lemba: A Drum of Affliction in Africa and the New World*, Garland (1982), John Janzen described how in the lower Congo/Atlantic region similarly positioned elites suffered from *lemba*—a complex of breathing issues and stomach pains—brought on by their economic activity and the unequal social relations it engendered. This required all manner of ritual activity and economic sacrifice to repair the strained relations these senior elites produced through their accumulation.



to prevailing notions of maturity— either via direct dissent or choosing to ignore social obligations foisted upon them. Paul Ocobock argues that often young men “pointedly interrogated and then flatly rejected the expectations of their elders and peers.”<sup>44</sup> There were many ways to be young and not simply in relation to elders. There were paths to adulthood not shepherded by lineage and economic elites. Some aspirations of authority, however, were not linked to maturity. States of *immaturity* could sometimes be gateways to immense power. This is the case for young men and boys in the Simba Rebellion via engagement in the discourses and practices of the *mai* war medicine.

This study aims to explore how adult practices of categorizing young people—as children, adolescents, delinquents, challengers, inheritors, and juniors—generated both possibilities and constraints in relations between the old and young. Andrew Burton and G. Thomas Burgess argue that no concept “surpassed generation both in terms of its importance in governing relations and as a source of values and sensibilities” in African history.<sup>45</sup> The dissertation’s focus on *mai-mai* as a therapeutic insurgency fought by youth raises the question of the object of violence and restoration. Against whom was insurgency directed? From within what polities did it emerge? These fundamental questions probe the links between war medicines and moral communities.

To interpret such dynamics, this study leans on John Lonsdale’s approach to processes of identification in Kenya, particularly engagements between “high” and “low” political actors

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<sup>44</sup> Paul Ocobock, *An Uncertain Age: The Politics of Manhood in Kenya*, New African Histories, (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2017).

<sup>45</sup> Andrew Ross Burton, and Helene Charton-Bigot, *Generations Past: Youth in East African History* (Ohio University Press, 2010), p 1.

within language groups.<sup>46</sup> Lonsdale focuses on the “deep politics” of a shared moral logic of interdependence that animates such communities. He explores processes of generational power transfer and related debates, tensions, and contestations.<sup>47</sup> To Lonsdale, moral disputation over the bonds and bounds of obligation and reciprocity is key. This study attends to such dynamics in eastern Congo during times of social change. Rather than focus, as other work, on relations between state actors and the rebels, this study focuses on the internal dynamics of reciprocity and responsibility in eastern Congo’s Kinande-speaking communities that animated forces on both sides of the conflict.

In Gikuyu communities in 1950s Kenya, Lonsdale studies changes in *ituika*, a “mythical transfer of power between generations,” subject to elder control.<sup>48</sup> *Ituika* was structured but not orderly; it produced ambiguities and conflict that were “costly, dangerous” and potentially divisive.<sup>49</sup> The idiom of power and transition afforded by *ituika* produced a shared domain of disputation around the bounds, maintenance, and legitimacy of forms of authority. It could establish ties between old and young. *Ituika* also provided a channel for youthful rebelliousness—perceived as an inevitable—toward productive ends. When “coming-of-age stalled by the 1950s” for Gikuyu youth, the Mau Mau rebellion emerged in the context of this “crisis of maturity in the late colonial period.” The rebels sought, in part, to resolve young men’s “ambiguous age.”<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> John Lonsdale, “Moral and Political Argument in Kenya,” *Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa*, 2004, p 76.

<sup>47</sup> John Lonsdale, “Globalization, Ethnicity, and Democracy: A View from the Hopeless Continent,” *Globalisation in World History*, 2002.

<sup>48</sup> Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya & Africa Vol II* (J. Currey, 1992), p 334.

<sup>49</sup> Berman and Lonsdale, p 346.

<sup>50</sup> Ocobock, *An Uncertain Age*, 11.

Tensions were similar in decolonizing eastern Congo, but opportunities for resolving intergenerational conflict more limited. *Ituika*, even stretched and strained, offered a common framework for disputation for Gikuyu elites and juniors. “Intellectual entrepreneurs” could work to shape its contours and attempt to justify changes to the existing order in a mutually comprehensible fashion.<sup>51</sup> In decolonizing eastern Congo, by contrast, such frameworks were largely absent. The colonial state feared that the secret worlds of initiatory practice could foment insurrection. Outlawing these activities weakened possibilities for practices of generational continuity and the maintenance of shared registers of social maturity between old and young. When customary authorities and rising economics elites in eastern Congo in the 1950s sought to draw on strained generational ties within Kinande-speaking communities to mobilize juniors against perceived ethnic interlopers on their lands, the tactic backfired. Widening economic inequality and deprivation, and frustrations over foreclosed paths to social maturity, turned youth who were sent to fight purported ethnic competitors against elder kin. A medicine-based insurgency soon took hold in the form of a *mai* movement. Elites were the primary targets of violence.

Against *ituika*, therefore, this study places another myth of intergenerational relations, the Mwindo Epic. Mwindo’s story is not about cross-generational notions of social maturity but rather how, in certain periods of moral crisis, regenerating moral community requires youth to enact violence against elites. I argue that *mai* medicine fits within the logic of Mwindo’s tale. Simba’s engagement in such registers of power, where immaturity is valorized, pushes analysis beyond exploring how youth engaged in self-fashioning or demanded access to respectable

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<sup>51</sup> Derek R. Peterson, *Creative Writing: Translation, Bookkeeping, and the Work of Imagination in Colonial Kenya* (Heinemann, 2004), p 18.

adulthood. Rather the movement drew its moral authority from the efficacy of a medicine that required self-sacrifice and self-denial to spur the revivification of moral order. *Mai*'s generative capacities required its agents to engage in acts of erasure, violence, and self-abnegation. Simba was at once a project of deep continuity and restoration as well also ruin and rupture.

Alongside such debates and actions, the study places the colonial state's management of unruly youth. It explores how religious leaders, village headman, business elites, and customary chiefs sought in similar and distinct ways to contend with dissident young people. Simba sought to contest such elite claims to authority and remake moral bounds of authority over youth in a decolonizing Congo. A focus on intergenerational conflict allows us to see how and why young people engaged *en masse* in the Simba movement. It explores why this particular kind of violence was deemed essential for social renewal well beyond the Congo Crisis period, into the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and the present day.

### **Sources and Evidence**

Evidence supporting the arguments in this dissertation are drawn from archives, interviews conducted in the field, and other troves of primary source material including personal correspondence, memoirs, and news reporting from the period. Archival collections consulted include the *Archives Africaines, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères*, in Brussels, Belgium (AA), the Ethnographic and Contemporary History Archival Collections at the *Musée Royal pour l'Afrique Centrale* in Tervuren, Belgium (MRAC), the Kabarole District Archives in Fort Portal, Uganda (KDA), the Beni Territory Archives at the Beni Territorial Administrative Headquarters in Mbau, North Kivu, Congo (BTA), the Oicha Hospital Archives in Oicha, North Kivu, Congo

(OHA), and the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library Archives in Ann Arbor, MI (GRF). Private collections were consulted in Beni and Rwenzori territories and in Ituri province.

Each archive is replete with idiosyncrasies and treasures. Each needed to be approached with a particular strategy. In the *Archives Africaines* I focused on the largely uncatalogued Governor General files. In this collection I located a series of documents concerning the management of criminal children throughout the colonial period. Much of this data shaped key arguments in the third chapter of this dissertation. My goal entering the archive was to locate the places where children emerged as subjects of colonial concern, not just as future laborers or soldiers, but as targets of mobilization for insurgency. I wondered if the state would misinterpret therapeutic insurgency as anti-state violence. While I found some evidence of this concern, I found far richer veins of material related to how the state “managed” rebellious children through experimental carceral techniques.<sup>52</sup> The focus of state agents on these debates and innovations suggested connections to the evolving methods other elites in religious, economic, and political spheres deployed against unruly youth in their respective ambits.

Engaging the Territory Archives at the Beni Territorial Administrative Headquarters was a qualitatively different from my experience in the metropole. The administrator in charge informed me that virtually all archival materials were burned on three occasions: in 1964, destroying colonial records, in 1996, destroying Zaire-era documents, and in 2002, destroying

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<sup>52</sup> One example of such a trace in the colonial archive was a set of documents concerning the conception and development of a children’s prison in Niangara that operated during much of the Belgian Congo era. Typical correspondence between officials concerned what constituted a child, what crimes were considered “adult,” and the tension between seeing the prison as a place for reform versus a method for inflicting punitive measures on delinquent children. As I continued to examine these materials, however, a shadow history of decades of sexual abuse of children by Belgian parochial administrators of the prison and the physical and sexual assault of children by adult prisoners emerged in confidential documents that eventually forced officials to close the prison. The history of what these children suffered during their incarceration is, to date, unpublished. While my project does not focus on the incarceration of children, the dilemma of state authorities to address the status of violent children as criminals while simultaneously casting them as vulnerable victims of adult coercion and violence is emerging as a theme of my research. This example illustrates how my archival research led me in new research directions and unearthed unexpected evidence but allowed me to maintain my focus on the inconsistent and incoherent colonial perception of criminal children as simultaneous perpetrators and victims.

materials from the Congo Wars period. He told me the office was just beginning to reconstitute surviving archival materials but, due to my patience in waiting for two days in his office to see what they had, I could look through what was there.

There was no coherence whatever in the materials. One document was a *laissez-passer* from 1943, another a requisition order from 1997, another a memo about salaries from 1983. Nothing was in folders or boxes, nor was there evidence of chronological, thematic, alphabetical or any other organizational logic I could discern. I asked if I could digitize the existing records to preserve them and was refused. I took notes on what I found and left, feeling a bit deflated if unsurprised. On my way out I was stopped by a local appeals judge. He handed me a self-published book called a *Petite histoire Nande: Les Banisanza hier et aujourd'hui* by Jean-Pierre Mufunza Lussenge, a prominent local intellectual and lawyer. The volume, a 109-page history of the Banisanza clan of the Kinande-speaking people, proved a trove of data, providing insights into the political imaginary of Beni-based elites, and described networks of thought and debate among emergent Nande ethno-nationalist figures. Where the formal archive failed to provide meaningful data, other sources of information sometimes emerged unexpectedly.

I also conducted dozens of one-on-one and small group interviews between 2010 and 2017 in Congo and western Uganda. In 2010 I traveled to Beni to conduct preliminary research on this topic with a small research team. We interviewed thirteen people in Oicha and Beni and took one excursion to the town of Lume in the Rwenzori Mountain zone. In May through July, 2011 I returned to conduct interviews on the Uganda side of borderlands of the Ruwenzori Mountains north of Kasese. I interviewed forty-one Bakonzo and Banande veterans of decolonization-era conflicts, Rwenzururu and the Simba Rebellion, from Uganda and Congo. In the summer of 2012, I was affiliated with the Hertog Global Strategy Initiative at Columbia

University and spent July in Beni conducting research, interviewing six core subjects several times. In September 2013, I relocated to Beni for two years with my family. The bulk of the interview work contained in this dissertation was conducted during that time. I became familiar with the core group of Simba veterans that would shape much of my thinking on the rebellion during this time. I conducted many dozens of formal and informal interviews with them and members of their kin. These interviews were conducted in Beni territory—including Mangina, Mavivi, Ngadi, Butembo, and Beni—as well Rwenzori territory and Ituri province.

Interview methods varied, but broadly the approach was straightforward. I sought to meet interlocutors in their homes. This frequently required travel to remote areas. Security deterioration made this increasingly difficult after October 2014. While I produced, in advance, question sheets of points I wished to raise in meetings, and also recorded and took notes during the interviews, my goal was to treat the conversations in a semi-structured fashion, allowing my interlocutors to help shape the dynamic of engagement and the themes that emerged. Typical interviews would begin with research subjects describing their lives in as much detail as they cared to share, and I would follow up relevant points in an as open-ended a fashion as possible. I sought both to respect the narratives provided while also push and probe on inconsistencies and generic elements in my interview subject's accounts.<sup>53</sup> Return visits would involve reviewing our previous conversations and exploring areas I wanted further detail on or felt unclear about. Interviews were conducted in Swahili and, occasionally, Kinande with the aid of a translator.

## **Chapter Overview**

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<sup>53</sup> White, *Speaking With Vampires*.

This dissertation uses the assembled evidence to explore core themes across six substantive chapters.

Chapter two explores the role of youth and children in contestations over authority in eastern Congo between 1876 and independence in 1960. The focus is on internal debates and struggles for control within Kinande-speaking communities in the western Rift Valley.<sup>54</sup> Volatile alliances and allegiances in this region generated insecurity and opportunity in the precolonial era when young men's violent labor enabled elites to consolidate trade routes and protect key resources. Youth also served to discipline internal dissent. The chapter traces how lineage groups in the region managed the colonial "pacification" of Kinande heartlands in 1929 and their role in subsequent rebellions in the area through 1945. It explores how newly commissioned customary authorities in the east sought to capture "floating" youth as followers; efforts complicated when initiation rituals were outlawed by the state amidst fears of a leopard-man insurgency called *Anioto*. I use linguistic evidence and re-read ethnographic work to suggest that *Anioto* were agents of elite power in conflicts between forces aligned with *wild power*, wielded by women and children, against *domestic authority*, dominated by male lineage seniors. *Mai* is shown to be an enduring countermedicine against elite practices of control like *Anioto*. Using this framework, I engage in a deep reading of the *Mwindo Epic* to trace how juvenile delinquency—a challenge to customary power—was narrated in the late 1950s as both socially destabilizing and renewing in a time of leadership failure. The epic's child protagonist, Mwindo, embodied the political dangers of stubborn, deliberate immaturity epitomized by children seen refusing political obligations of adulthood. Mwindo sought to marshal wild power against domestic authority, to unbuild and rebuild social order. This chapter uses immaturity—a logic and characteristic found

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<sup>54</sup> This was a zone of interface between the eastern expansion of Belgian colonial power and the earlier westward expansion of Zanzibar-linked trading dynasties from in the 19th century.



in archival records, linguistic evidence, and ethnographic material— to explain the significance of “wild power” to *mai* medicine, a vital component to therapeutic insurgencies, notably the Simba Rebellion and contemporary *mai-mai* movements.

The third chapter traces how “lost” children increasingly occupied adult attention in the Belgian Congo from the interwar period to independence. It follows the state attempts to define “juvenile delinquents” as a criminal category with special regimes of carceral intervention from 1931 forward.<sup>55</sup> Drawing on evidence from the colonial archive, this chapter traces the techniques that the Dominican Fathers at a special juvenile prison colony deployed to transform criminal youth into productive subjects. I analyze the strategies of the penal colony until the state abruptly shuttered it in 1957 amid backchannel panic over abuses and mismanagement. In the same period, American Protestant missionaries entered newly “pacified” regions of eastern Congo bearing urgent desires to bring children’s wayward souls into the Kingdom of God. This process came with imposing humiliating sartorial and economic restrictions while also offering opportunities for new forms of respectability. The chapter juxtaposes these two colonial itineraries of youth transformation away from waywardness. State authorities sought to convert delinquent “perversity” into respectability through a threshold of “moral reeducation.” Protestant missionaries sought to transform fallenness into salvation through a threshold of baptism. Despite the limited possibilities afforded to young people by both projects, each foreclosed promising paths to social adulthood. The subjects of these reforming visions attempted to refashion these transformational projects in ways that caused each to collapse. On the eve of a national threshold, from colony to post-colony, state disciplinary power and Protestant church authority converged within a class of vernacular elites in eastern Congo.

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<sup>55</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt explores multifarious forms of colonial “carceral techniques” to great effect in *A Nervous State* working from language developed by Michel Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* (1975).

Chapter four further explores the formation of this elite class, and how and why juvenile frustrations against these powerful figures rose to the level of violent rebellion by 1964. The chapter focuses on key political, social, and economic dynamics taking place in Butembo, a strategic urban zone in eastern Congo, between independence and the onset of the Simba Rebellion. The focus is on the consolidation of novel, forms of elite power and class, and the response of excluded young people to these developments. It tracks how traders used the economic opportunities of independence to form a class of vernacular, urban Kinande-speaking elite in eastern Congo between 1958 and 1964, and then used their rising influence to shape CERECA, a politically radical, Nande-dominated political party. Young people became vital laborers and political constituents but found little opportunity for personal advantage within the projects of local elite. At the same time, elite sought to mobilize young warriors to repel Kinyarwanda-speakers immigrants from lands they claimed in a surge of xenophobic violence in 1963 that ultimately backfired. Simba rebellion months later.

The fifth chapter is a microhistory of the 1964 Simba Rebellion, focusing on Henri, a young teenager from a subsistence farming family near the town of Mangina. It follows his experience as a Simba for three years. He and a compatriot were among the last to desert the embattled Simba in their last strongholds within the forests of Equateur in 1967. Using microhistory to reorient the scale of the dissertation's analysis, this chapter works against simplistic histories of coercion. Instead, it focuses on attractions to songs, clothing, medicine, alcohol, love, and camaraderie that enabled Henri and his peers to make sense of their involvement in the movement. Working out from memories of one subject, this chapter seeks to capture the sensory experience of being part of the movement and taking *mai*. This moves the argument toward a focus on possession and trance as ways to access wild power, while

unpacking the concept and practices of *mai*. It explores the perspective of child soldiers and the members of communities their violence affected. Finally, this chapter attempts to use the history emphasized in earlier chapters to interpret some of the tactics of the Simba, such as mass trials and summary executions of “enemies of the people” conducted by child combatants.

Chapter six is concerned with the afterlives of the 1964 rebellion in eastern Congo. It explores how creative writers used death to shape social meaning for the living in the post-rebellion era. A rebel newspaper called *The Martyr*, a biography pulled from a genre of Protestant missionary martyrdom literature, and *Vivant Afrique*, the official magazine of the White Fathers, are analyzed. Following arguments and evidence from each source, the links between death talk and social action are probed. What types of communities did writers seek to constitute with their interpretations and arguments about the meaning of death? The chapter moves from individual experience toward globally circulating discourses around the Simba and the implications of their violence. Threads link back to the dynamics of the first chapter: it examines how delinquency and martyrdom shared a common register of self-sacrifice. Finally, this chapter explores what forms of excavated memory and memories of trauma tell as subjects’ recall, reframe, and recast their experiences within the context of proliferating “death talk” in postcolonial Congo.

The final chapter moves to the present and very recent past. It centers on a 2013 accusation of cannibalism against UN agents in eastern Congo. It argues that the UN, despite its overwhelming logistical presence, is seen as a deeply resented “bad neighbor” in the communities it occupies. The UN’s bad reputation is attributed to its refusal to share resources equitably, the hiddenness of its quotidian activities, and the ineffectiveness of its interventions. This perception of venality recalls the logics of medicinal insurgency that animated *mai-mai*

movements in eastern Congo's history. The chapter examines how UNICEF's work to "disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate" young combatants became a mechanism by which the "child soldier" category has been reproduced in local debate. Child soldiers constitute a pariah class with limited options for community reengagement after passing through UNICEF DDR efforts. I argue that UNICEF interventions unintentionally reduce possibilities for reintegration that do not rely on state and state-like entities like the UN. I describe three vernacular categories for child combatants, *les bandits*, *shege*, and *kadogo*. Flattening of these categories into one of "child soldier" by development organizations led to the emergence of a new "floating" cohort of young men unable, or unwilling, to engage in projects of social advancement and integration. I draw upon the ideas of moral re-education and threshold experiences from the first two chapters. I argue that the logics of delinquency continue. The complex position of violent children as simultaneously perpetrators of violence, objects of violence, and subjects of "protection," carry echoes of colonial-era juvenile criminal management. The chapter closes by re-examining layers of discourse and practice around the contemporary power of *mai* relative to perceptions of its uses and roles in the 1964 rebellion. This chapter's arguments are drawn from interviews in contemporary Congo, newspaper accounts of cannibalism in the local press, the historiography of cannibal claims in Congolese history, UN official responses to these claims, and UN documents on child rehabilitation.

### **Congo's Child Soldiers and International Law**

While the dissertation uses this array of sources to focus deeply on vernacular debates over authority, war medicines, and notions of youth circulating within eastern Congolese communities, it also aims to move between scales, from discourse within kin and language

groups, to relevant regional and national debates, to globally-circulating interpretations of movements like the Simba Rebellion. Studying *mai-mai* movements over time allows us to make these scalar moves. Today the question of the role of the young in war in Africa remains an intense, contentious contemporary debate with significant legal consequences.

In March 2006, Congolese warlord Thomas Lubanga Dyilo became the first person arrested by the International Criminal Court (ICC). The charge was “conscripting and enlisting children under the age of fifteen years and using them to participate actively in hostilities” in eastern Congo.<sup>56</sup> Six years later, Lubanga was convicted and sentenced to fourteen years in prison. One key debate during the trial concerned the agency of those who fought under Lubanga. Could individuals under the age of fifteen who claimed to join the movement of their own volition be considered child soldiers. A Special Representative to the Court submitted, as an expert witness, an *amicus curiae* arguing that:

“The distinction between voluntary enlistment and forced recruitment is a distinction without meaning in the context of armed conflict because even the most voluntary of acts can be a desperate attempt to survive by children with a limited number of options in the context of war.”

Just as the scale and character of violence threatened to overwhelm analysis in the Simba Rebellion, so too the question of agency and manipulation threatens to overwhelm the debate about the role of children in conflict in places like eastern Congo today. Once again, I return to the ambivalence of the position of young soldiers in movements like *mai-mai* that I witnessed in Beni in 2003. Again, we are faced with the dynamic of figures moving between extreme poles of vulnerability and power.

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<sup>56</sup> The Prosecutor v. Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, No. ICC-01/04-01/06 (International Criminal Court October 7, 2012).

This dissertation attempts to provide a richer, more complex, historically-rooted portrait of insurgent movements involving the young, one that does not undermine the victimization of children in conflict. It seeks to locate and trace out logics of power and authority that go beyond the global juridical assessments of how and why the young make war. This study follows Pamela Reynolds argument that “a more careful analysis of the role of the young in conflicts could contribute to a more accurate description of the nature of war and of the international rules that are established to contain it and to respond to its aftermath.”<sup>57</sup> There are times when attentiveness to uncomfortable ambivalence can open space for new understandings of violence and social change, ones that illuminate landscapes of political conflict and social change in Africa.

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<sup>57</sup> Pamela Reynolds, *War in Worcester*, Fordham, (2012), 182.

## Chapter Two: Killing the Talking Baby: Authority and Immaturity in Eastern Congo, 1870-1960

In September 1872, an item appeared in newspapers throughout the British Empire advertising a series of photographic prints of “the Negroboy that accompanied Mr. Stanley to Europe.”<sup>58</sup> The seller offered four portrait variations, each with a child posed alongside the well-known explorer, Henry Morton Stanley. In the images, Stanley’s posture evokes heroism: he stands *contrapposto* in pith helmet, safari khakis, wading boots, and a Winchester at the ready.<sup>59</sup> The boy, by contrast, is ramrod straight in the background—diminutive, bare-chested, eyes fixed on the ground, a rifle slung over his shoulder, carried in the manner of a porter: hand gripping the end of the barrel.<sup>60</sup> This is Kalulu, the ten-year-old whose image an enterprising trader hoped would interest an audience of elite imperial consumers. Though unstated, the ad marketed something novel: the very first photographs to enter global circulation of an African child with a firearm.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Advertisement by Wyman & Company, “Mr. Stanley, Discoverer of Dr. Livingstone,” *The Pioneer*, September 28, 1872, sec. 9.

<sup>59</sup> Wyman & Company. Consumers would choose from images of Kalulu by himself, available in images depicting “three positions.” A further “five positions” depicted both Kalulu and Stanley together, “en route to find Dr. Livingstone.” All eight variants were available in *carte de visite*, (2.125 x 3.5 inches) or cabinet formats (4.25 x 6.5 inches).

<sup>60</sup> Simon Gikandi, *Slavery and the Culture of Taste* (Princeton University Press, 2011). This framing Gikandi demonstrates how over the centuries the visual trope emerged of “a black standing on the margins” in paintings where African-originated figures became the literal shadow of powerful whites, witnesses of difference and deference “to enhance the standing of the masters,” p 267.

<sup>61</sup> While difficult to conclusively establish this, it is clear that Africans were not featured in European traveling shows or photographic galleries (see Bernth Lindfors, *Africans on Stage: Studies in Ethnological Show Business* (Indiana University Press,

The pairing of a powerful cosmopolitan figure with a young African combatant in his service sold in great numbers as a collectible and curio to British colonists and admirers at home.<sup>62</sup> In late 19<sup>th</sup> century Great Lakes Africa, where the portraits' subjects first encountered one another, relations between powerful, elder males and young, militarized boys were preponderant. Powerful men redefined the social, political, and economic dynamics of the region. Rival figures like Stanley, Zanzibari warlord Tippu Tip, and Mirambo of Unyamwizi, consolidated small polities in new trade-based inland empires. These big men made war for wealth, influence, and authority with armies comprised of young men much like Kalulu.

This chapter explores the relationship between patriarchal authorities and young warriors in a region—now called eastern Congo—at key moments between 1870 and the outbreak of the Simba rebellion in 1964. It argues that the actions of the core subjects of this dissertation—tens of thousands of juvenile<sup>63</sup> combatants who purged religious, customary, and customary political authority in 1964—are best understood within a longer history of contestations and complicity between lineage juniors and their elders. It examines the historical persistence of three kinds of violence that featured juvenile Congolese actors over a nearly ninety-year period. The first was a

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1999)) until 1893. Thus, this series seems to present first image of an African holding a weapon with European or American provenance.

<sup>62</sup> No doubt the perception of a ready market for such images was linked to the high volume of sales of books and engravings achieved by Henry Morton Stanley through his bestselling *In Darkest Africa*, vol. 1 (S. Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1890).

<sup>63</sup> I use the term “juvenile” to represent the youth and pre-adult status of this category of person, while attempting to avoid using a biological referent of “adolescence” or legal frameworks “minor,” and the too capacious “child.” The focus is to use, as in Emmanuel Kwaku Akyeampong, *Themes in West Africa's History* (Ohio University Press, 2006) p. 120 a term both particular and broad. I define juvenile as an unmarried male without children. It does not refer to chronologically measured age or age set.



system of violent labor and laborers called *ruga-ruga*.<sup>64</sup> The second, *Anioto*,<sup>65</sup> emerged as an assassination movement against dissident junior figures within lineage groups and become the source of immense colonial anxiety. Deemed a threat to chiefly authority, *Anioto* usually targeted women and children. The last and most enduring logic of violence is embodied by a single figure: Mwindo, a mythical character. Versions of his epic tale capture a set of practices, medicines, and discourses that suggest the imagined foundations of recurring therapeutic insurgencies that leveraged wild powers to do violence against venal elite male authority.

Our geographical focus is eastern Congo's Albertine Rift zone.<sup>66</sup> During the period under study this area was subject to immense economic, political, and social flux and change, even as enduring logics of violence and contestations over authority persisted. My basic argument is *not* that these forms of violence reveal what Steven Feierman has critically called a "secret continuity" between the precolonial and postcolonial. I contend that decades of colonial power,

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<sup>64</sup> *Ruga-ruga* lacks specific definition, but for examples of historians' attempts to define it, see pages 37-38 of this dissertation. One definition would be: figures who comprised a "permanent standing army" as opposed to the mobilizable but predominately civilian young men in other Great Lakes societies in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>65</sup> The literal meaning of the word *anioto* (or as it also frequently appears: *aniota*) is "leopard-man" and its variations appear in many languages in the Albertine Rift zone. In Kinande, for instance, the word is "ekinyota" and is translated by Nguessimo Mutaka and Kamable Kavutirwaki in their *Kinande-English/English-Kinande Dictionary* (Rutgers University: African Anaphora Project, 2008) as "leopard-man," p 336. Note that this is a completely different word, and shares no root form, with the word for leopard: "eboha" and is also distinct from the non-hyphenated word, "leopard man" which is "ekihokohoko."

<sup>66</sup> This is a geographic subzone of Great Lakes Africa from the western escarpment of the Rift Valley including the Rwenzori and Virunga mountain ranges to the west, and the westernmost rim of the Congo basin rainforest to the east. The Albertine's lower elevation zone passes from Lake Malawi in the south to Lake Albert in the north—nearly 1000 miles. It drains many of Africa's Great Lakes: gathering waters that flow, eventually, to the Nile River. The Albertine Rift's particularly lush ecology allowed for agricultural intensification and subsequent population growth. It's remote situation, far from both the Atlantic and Indian oceans meant it would become the zone of interface between the eastern expansion of Belgian colonial power (embodied by Stanley and his band) and the westward expansion of Zanzibar-linked trading dynasties (like those who had initially captured Kalulu) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As the slave trade advanced from both east and western coasts to converge in this area volatile alliances and allegiances generated insecurity and lent existential importance for African elites to the management of young men, in particular, for the purposes of consolidating trade routes and protecting access to key resources, as well as disciplining internal dissent. See David Lee Schoenbrun, *A Green Place, a Good Place: Agrarian Change, Gender, and Social Identity in the Great Lakes Region to the 15th Century* (Heinemann Educ Books, 1998) for a good overview of this region prior to this dissertation's scope.

state violence, and social change did affect relations and ideas.<sup>67</sup> Instead, the chapter traces how “durable bundles of meaning and practice” regarding the roles of young male combatants in social stability and change shaped discourse and action in eastern Congo over several generations both with and against the grain of colonial order and violence.<sup>68</sup> Elites made use of juniors and mercenaries to achieve their own political and economic projects in eastern Congo.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, I show how social positions of immaturity and marginality became a source of power for juvenile males and also a powerful source of concern for patriarchs in the region.<sup>70</sup>

### **Kalulu, Stanley, and Ruga-Ruga**

In 1876, four years after his likeness became an item of exchange in the imperial world, Kalulu travelled back to Africa. He was part of King Leopold II’s International African Association (IAA) expedition sent to survey and legitimize the king’s land claims in central Africa.

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<sup>67</sup> Steven Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals: Anthropology and History in Tanzania* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), p 17.

<sup>68</sup> David L. Schoenbrun, “Conjuring the Modern in Africa: Durability and Rupture in Histories of Public Healing between the Great Lakes of East Africa,” *The American Historical Review* 111, no. 5 (December 1, 2006): p 1403.

<sup>69</sup> There is a deep history of managing social “aging” and maturation, especially of age sets in sub-Saharan African history. Perhaps most notably, and linked to the history this dissertation seeks to track, is Shaka’s management of age set marriage for his warriors, see Elizabeth A. Eldredge, “Sources of Conflict in Southern Africa, C. 1800–30: The ‘Mfecane’ Reconsidered,” *The Journal of African History* 33, no. 1 (March 1992): p 27. Making warriors beholden entirely on Shaka for access to reproduction produced a direct, unmediated, linkage between him and these figures.

<sup>70</sup> Both coercive forms of armed work and the complex labor relations between juniors by seniors were not new in eastern Congo. The difference between slave and mercenary was ambiguous. Douglas Northrup argued that “slavery was eastern [Congo’s] first form of ‘employment.’” (*Beyond the Bend in the River*, pg.123) This supposes that slavery encountering societies without labor regimes and forms of exchange. Rather it is clear that the mobilization of youth by elites as productive of kinds of initiation to power were common in pre-colonial northeastern Congo. For many years scholars, building on pioneering work by Claude Meillassoux, argued that the “lineage mode of production”—Africa’s precolonial economic regime—was based on the exploitation of youth labor by seniors. The two key engines of growth were long distance trade and war. But this relied on continuity and stability... so there was tremendous flux against which stabilization happened: leading to violence. Central African youth, in these early anthropological studies, occupied an ambivalent social position where their labor necessarily constituted and perpetuated elite power. They were the engines of social reproduction. At the same time, male youth in particular needed careful management—being provisioned with wives, offices, and wealth in good time—as their dissent and flight could unravel the very fabric of social cohesion, should they feel misused or blocked from advancement and the possibilities of accumulating wealth as social adults.

Publically, the IAA purportedly aimed to “eliminate the terrible scourge of slavery” in the region and find a “means of opening up the interior of the continent to the commerce, industry, and scientific enterprise of the civilized world.”<sup>71</sup> Leopold’s grandiose imperial motives also eminently commercial, justifying the “liberal expenditure of his private means” to establish sovereignty over a vast expanse of Africa.<sup>72</sup> One lavish expense of this endeavor involved retaining the services of the famous Stanley to lead the expedition.<sup>73</sup> Europeans imagined the journey to be highly dangerous. The region was roiling with competing militias and slaving war bands. With much hyperbole Stanley’s explorer peers sent him on his way as a likely “martyr in the cause of geographical enquiry.”<sup>74</sup> In the light of the strategic importance, expense, and risk of the trip, it is noteworthy that a key member of the retinue would be the boy from the curio postcards: ten-year-old Kalulu.<sup>75</sup>

Stanley purchased Kalulu from a slave trader in Tabora (Tanganyika) in 1871, less than one year before they posed for portraits in a New York City studio.<sup>76</sup> Stanley once described Kalulu’s purchase in emancipatory terms but the child’s status was complex. Kalulu was not free to decide his own fate nor return to his family or place of origin. Instead, he worked without pay for five

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<sup>71</sup> E. Delmar Morgan, “The Free State of the Congo,” *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society and Monthly Record of Geography* 7, no. 4 (1885): 223–30.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. In addition, much has been written about Leopold’s intentions behind establishing the “Free State.” The most popular of these texts is Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold’s Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1999) and Nancy Rose Hunt’s critique of such a perspective in *A Nervous State* beginning on page 3.

<sup>73</sup> Morgan, “The Free State of the Congo,” p 225.

<sup>74</sup> Charles P. Daly and Alexander Crummell, “The Plan of the King of Belgium for the Civilization of Central Africa, and the Suppression of the Slave Trade,” *Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York* 9 (1877): 88–103, p 90.

<sup>75</sup> Stanley recorded his birth name as Ndugu M’hali.

<sup>76</sup> Tim Jeal, *Stanley: The Impossible Life of Africa’s Greatest Explorer* (Yale University Press, 2007), p 111. Kalulu was purchased in September of 1871.

years as the explorer's "faithful body servant."<sup>77</sup> Stanley, like many contemporaneous foreigners in complex kin relations with African children, described Kalulu as his "adopted son."<sup>78</sup> Most likely his status was similar to many living in the Congo Basin region. People like Kalulu continually passed, as Nancy Rose Hunt writes, "from one form of subjugation to another."<sup>79</sup> Whatever the precise relation with Stanley, Kalulu became a permanent member of the explorer's entourage. He was part of the expedition to locate David Livingstone. As such he featured in public fetes in the United States and Europe during Stanley's publicity tours after locating the famous missionary. Kalulu's role was to come on stage, talk and sing in Swahili, and demonstrate the Islamic prayer posture of *salah*.<sup>80</sup> He grew famous in his own right. Kalulu's likeness was cast at Madame Taussaud's alongside waxworks of Livingstone and Stanley.<sup>81</sup> After the grueling publicity tour of hundreds of lectures across the United States and Europe, Stanley enrolled Kalulu in a parochial boarding school in England for 18 months. At Livingstone's funeral on April 18, 1874 the only African present was Kalulu.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> "Stanley's Journey Across Africa," *The American Naturalist* 11, no. 11 (November 1877): 695.

<sup>78</sup> Henry Morton Stanley, "The Land of The Moon. A Graphic Pen Picture of Unyamwezi," *The New York Herald*, August 9, 1872, p 3.

<sup>79</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo* (Duke University Press, 1999), p44.

<sup>80</sup> "Stanley and Kalulu. The Presents and Tokens of Sovereigns and Sages to the Traveller,," *The New York Herald*, November 22, 1872.

<sup>81</sup> From *The romance of Madam Taussuds*, p. 183 by John Theodore Tassuad, 1920. In addition the November 16, 1872 edition of the Rhode Island Mercury, indicates that Stanley with "his boy Kalulu" was engaged in 100 lectures across the US in 1873, each for a \$500 fee—equivalent to about 10,000 dollars per lecture in 2016 currency. The tour was not as successful as he'd hoped, but had it sold out it would have yielded the equivalent of approximately one million dollars revenue for Stanley.

<sup>82</sup> Dr. Livingstone et al., "Report to the Council on the Arrangements for the Funeral of Dr. Livingstone," *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 18, no. 4 (1873): 445–50. Kalulu's title in the funeral program was as "an African boy," pg 450.

Stanley wrote intensely, even erotically, about his charge: “Kalulu understands my ways and mode of life exactly... Kalulu—young antelope—is frisky. I have but to express a wish and it is gratified. He is a perfect Mercury, but a marvelously black one.”<sup>83</sup> No doubt to capitalize on Kalulu’s growing fame, and for other reasons that can only be speculated, Stanley published a lengthy “romantic novel” about an African noble entitled *My Kalulu: Prince, King and Slave* in 1873. In the preface, Stanley promised his readers: “I can assure those interested in Kalulu that someday, if I live, I shall attempt to take him back to his own country, through numberless adventure, incidents, and scenes, in the hope that he shall enjoy his own again. But if I have failed in this venture, then Kalulu must stop at Zanzibar, where the reader may fancy him, if he likes, eating mangoes and oranges, until I fetch him out.”<sup>84</sup>

Kalulu’s thoughts about his patron were not recorded, but events suggest Kalulu was not content with his situation.<sup>85</sup> When the IAA expedition reached eastern Congo in 1876, likely the region of Kalulu’s birth, he escaped.<sup>86</sup> Stanley halted the group’s progress and sent out teams to find him. When recaptured, Stanley forced Kalulu to wear chains—marking slave status—as punishment. As the expedition traversed a rapid part of the Congo River by foot, Kalulu was swept away and drowned in September 1877. He was fifteen-years-old at the time.<sup>87</sup> Stanley

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<sup>83</sup> Henry Morton Stanley, “The Land of The Moon. A Graphic Pen Picture of Unyamwezi,” *The New York Herald*, August 9, 1872.

<sup>84</sup> Henry Morton Stanley, *My Kalulu, Prince, King, and Slave: A Story of Central Africa* (C. Scribner’s Sons, 1873), p ix.

<sup>85</sup> The absence of Kalulu’s words on the record is due, at least in part, to the fact that Stanley served as Kalulu’s sole translator on publicity tours.

<sup>86</sup> We can make an assumption about Kalulu’s origins for two reasons: his place of purchase and the location he chose to attempt to escape Stanley. First, Tabora was a site, among others, where slavers operating in eastern Congo would send many slaves for purchase via Indian ocean routes. See Sarah Croucher and Stephanie Wynne-Jones, “Slave Routes in Western Tanzania: A Preliminary Report on Survey in Tabora and Ujiji,” *African Diaspora Archaeology Newsletter*, December 2006. In addition, we can speculate that Kalulu would likely to attempt escape in a region with which he possessed some familiarity rather than in parts totally unknown. That he attempted escape in northeastern Congo implies some familiarity with the region.

<sup>87</sup> He died in the region now called Inga Falls. Stanley gave the section of the river where the boy died Kalulu’s name.

reported being abject at his death.<sup>88</sup> We may never know the mood of the recently re-enslaved youth who lost his footing. Perhaps the vagaries of despair, enslavement, and the possibility of a lifetime under the hand of Stanley presented the rushing waters as a means of permanent escape for Kalulu.

Kalulu's international fame, unique and bombastic patron, experiences of violence, and overseas travels, cast him as a complex, enigmatic figure. Placing him at the core of this chapter's key arguments, provides a uniquely individuated—if profoundly mediated—portrait of an African youth who hailed from a militia band in late 19<sup>th</sup> century east and central Africa. In some ways, only his unique international trajectory beside Stanley makes Kalulu exceptional. In other very important ways, many young men in what is now eastern Congo lived lives much like Kalulu's in his era. Coerced into a series of complex relationships with powerful elder male figures, they were enticed, compelled, or coerced them to participate in violent activities.<sup>89</sup> There are many whose names, unlike Kalulu's, are not recorded, and who left behind no pictures. All served in the keep of powerful adult men with violent ambitions. Each sought money, political control, sometimes territory, and always clients and followers. Among the most strategically important of these followers were *ruga-ruga*.

*Ruga-ruga* warrior movements thrived in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century east and central Africa.<sup>90</sup> Most *ruga-ruga* were active from 1860 through 1897, some professionally so—moving between

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<sup>88</sup> Tim Jeal, *Stanley: The Impossible Life of Africa's Greatest Explorer* (Yale University Press, 2007), p 23.

<sup>89</sup> This depends, of course, on which elite one served under. Figures under Nyungu-ya-mawe or Mirambo anticipated marriage and land if they survived their martial adventures. Most others, like Kalulu, had uncertain futures.

<sup>90</sup> Aylward Shorter, "Nyungu-Ya-Mawe and the 'Empire of the Ruga-Rugas,'" *The Journal of African History* 9, no. 2 (1968): 235–59.

leaders.<sup>91</sup> The interplay between the increasing penetration of slaving economies into the Great Lakes region and pre-colonial European exploration catalyzed novel forms of organizing young male labor. The primary innovation involved a shift out of kin relations to other economic and political arrangements. Unlike relations within lineage, *ruga-ruga* were typically temporarily engaged. John Iliffe summarized *ruga-ruga* as “wild young men without family ties” who served as for-hire or press-ganged warriors under the region’s powerful men.<sup>92</sup> Andrew Roberts suggests *ruga-ruga* bands consisted of “runaway slaves, war-captives, deserting porters, social outcasts and restless young men eager for adventure.”<sup>93</sup>

Powerful east and central African traders and others elites relied on *ruga-ruga* labor in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to make war and establish and maintain extensive political and economic control in the region.<sup>94</sup> These leaders established kin-like relations with *ruga-ruga* warriors. Among these were Mirambo of Unyamwezi, an expansionist leader who consolidated smaller polities in the Great Lakes region,<sup>95</sup> his rival Nyungu-ya-Mawe, a leader of a competing

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<sup>91</sup> Beyond Shorter’s work, a review of other early studies of this subject can be found in Michael Pesek, “Ruga-Ruga. The History of an East African Profession, 1820-1919,” in *German Colonialism Revisited: Asian and African Responses to German Colonialism*, by N.A. Berman, P. Nganang, and K. Muelhahn (University of Michigan Press, 2014), 85–100 where he cites them as: Edward A. Alpers, “Nineteenth Century-Prelude to Colonialism,” in *Zamani. A survey of East African History*, ed. B.A. Ogot and J. A. Kieran (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1968); Ralph A. Austen, *World War I Northwestern Tanzania under German and British Rule. Colonial Policy and Tribal Politics, 1889-1939* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968); R. W. Beachey, “The East African Ivory Trade in the Nineteenth Century,” *Journal of African History*, no. 8 (1967); Norman R. Bennett, *Mirambo of Tanzania, 1840?-1884* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971); John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); on p. 21.

<sup>92</sup> John Iliffe, *Honour in African History* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 89.

<sup>93</sup> Michelle R. Moyd, *Violent Intermediaries: African Soldiers, Conquest, and Everyday Colonialism in German East Africa* (Ohio University Press, 2014) p 78. She is drawing on Andrew Roberts chapter “Nyamwezi Trade” in Richard Gray and David Birmingham, *Pre-Colonial African Trade: Essays on Trade in Central and Eastern Africa before 1900* (Oxford, 1970) p 175.

<sup>94</sup> Jonathon Glassman, *Feasts and Riot: Revelry, Rebellion, and Popular Consciousness on the Swahili Coast, 1856-1888* (Heinemann, 1995) argues that for elites like Bushiri in Tanzania, it was only the erosion of “popular support” that led such figures to enlist mercenary forces like *ruga-ruga*.

<sup>95</sup> Currently Tabora district of Tanzania, a prominent warlord from 1860 to 1884.

emergent “business firm,”<sup>96</sup> and Tippu Tip, the major Zanzibari slave trader and warlord.<sup>97</sup> Rival “*ruga-ruga* empires” emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and went to war over valuable slaving, commodity, and transportation routes from central Africa to the Indian Ocean coast.<sup>98</sup> These powerful big men transformed the roles of *ruga-ruga* during this period; through the 1860s, *ruga-ruga* seem to have been primarily roving guards who protected the many porters carrying goods along valuable trade routes. It was only during the ascendance of consolidating figures like Mirambo and Nyungu-ya-Mawe that the term came to signify a stabilized fighting force aligned with warrior-trader elites.<sup>99</sup> Some *ruga-ruga* were affiliated with formal military movements, provisioned with firearms and bedecked in imperial costume.<sup>100</sup> Others entered battle intoxicated with marijuana, wearing “ghastly finery” including human entrails and teeth, beads and feathers, charms and medicinal objects—otherwise nude.<sup>101</sup>

What linked the movements were the core relations that animated them. *Ruga-ruga* were young men enlisted into the expansive political projects of powerful non-kin elder men. Some *ruga-ruga* undoubtedly enthusiastically embraced the expansionist opportunities afforded them. Violence and threat compelled others to join against their wills. Brutality characterized *ruga-*

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<sup>96</sup> A contemporary of Mirambo, called “emperor of the Ruga-Ruga” in Shorter’s piece.

<sup>97</sup> Michael Pesek, “Ruga-Ruga. The History of an East African Profession, 1820-1919,” in *German Colonialism Revisited: Asian and African Responses to German Colonialism*, by N.A. Berman, P. Nganang, and K. Muelhahn (University of Michigan Press, 2014), p 4.

<sup>98</sup> John Illife initially calls describes the organization in this way, and the imperial language is taken up by Pesek. “Ruga-ruga” p. 6.

<sup>99</sup> Michelle R. Moyd, *New African Histories : Violent Intermediaries : African Soldiers, Conquest, and Everyday Colonialism in German East Africa* (Ohio University Press, 2014).

<sup>100</sup> Pesek, “Ruga-Ruga. The History of an East African Profession, 1820-1919.”

<sup>101</sup> Aylward Shorter, “Nyungu-Ya-Mawe and the ‘Empire of the Ruga-Rugas,’” *The Journal of African History* 9, no. 2 (1968): 241.



*ruga* tactics, and many feared their scorched earth approach. As German forces began to enlist their own *ruga-ruga* in pre-colonial east Africa in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, one officer wrote: “The *ruga-ruga* are of use if one likes to destroy entire regions. In that they are top-notch.”<sup>102</sup> So feared were they, and so diverse the aspirations and ambitions of the powerful elder men who marshalled them, that on occasion African communities would pre-emptively attack some of the first Christian missionaries traveling with their African entourages into central Africa; they feared they were *ruga-ruga*.<sup>103</sup>

It was not only African elites and official colonial agents who engaged their services. International fortune seekers were also eager to take part in the extractive economies of the Great Lakes milieu. Stanley was a member of this cadre. So too was Oscar Baumann, a German explorer, who brought a retinue of 138 persons through what is now eastern Congo and Burundi in 1892, including dozens he called “*ruga-ruga*.”<sup>104</sup> Emin Pasha famously established a base of followers and *ruga-ruga* to consolidate and protect his interests. Another prominent European warlord was the Irish missionary turned trader and smuggler, Charles Stokes, who gained prominence after the establishment of the Congo Free State in 1885. Stokes abandoned his religious calling, married into the prominent Congolese Mtinginya family, and by 1893 exported as much as £20,000 of ivory out of Congo annually.<sup>105</sup> He gathered a retinue of Sukuma-speaking followers and coordinated various legal and illicit trading activities from eastern Congo

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<sup>102</sup> From the Bundesarchiv R1001/1030 Schwessinger to Soden, November 26, 1892 quoted in Pesek, “Ruga-ruga” p. 14.

<sup>103</sup> Charles F. Holmes, “Zanzibari Influence at the Southern End of Lake Victoria: The Lake Route,” *African Historical Studies* 4, no. 3 (1971) pg 498.

<sup>104</sup> Jean-Pierre Chrétien, “Le Passage de L’expédition d’Oscar Baumann Au Burundi (Septembre-Octobre 1892),” *Cahiers d’Études Africaines* 8, no. 29 (1968): p 92.

<sup>105</sup> This is worth over \$2,000,000 in 2018 dollars. From Holmes, “Zanzibari Influence” p 495.

into east Africa. In 1895, the Belgian General Hubert Lothaire began investigating Stokes under suspicion of treason against the Free State government. Lothaire accused Stokes of selling guns to insurgent Africans in exchange for ivory.<sup>106</sup> When evidence emerged that armaments that Stokes imported into Congo were being actively used in clashes with Free State forces in the region, Belgian officials summarily executed the Irishman. Stokes' death caused "much excitement" abroad, escalating into a serious diplomatic incident between the United Kingdom and Belgium. The outcome was a 205,000 franc compensation payment from King Leopold's Free State to the British government and also to the "natives of... Mr. Stokes' caravan...deprived of their chief."<sup>107</sup> Across Congo's extractive zones figures like Stokes found a ready place and ripe social and economic milieu for their big man aspirations, but competition was fierce and the stakes of failure high. The death of Stokes coincided with the collapse of Zanzibari influence in eastern Congo in the face of Belgian military might in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was a twilight time for the *ruga-ruga* in Africa's Great Lakes region and well beyond. General Lothaire's successor, Francis Dhanis, led a campaign in 1897 to suppress internal competition and drive out the last warlords from eastern Congo. This so-called "Arab War" was the last major colonial military action in the region for almost two decades.

What is lost in existing analysis is that *ruga-ruga* formed a kind of process-structure that did not end with Belgian colonialism, but rather found place within it and beyond it. One can see strong traces of these relations in post-colonial Congo. Mutual advantage, and sometimes coercion, that knit elders and juniors together in common violent purpose remain part of the story of Congolese politics throughout the colonial and postcolonial periods.

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<sup>106</sup> Edmund Burke, *The Annual Register* (Rivingtons, 1896), p 372-373.

<sup>107</sup> Burke, *The Annual Register* (1896), p 373.

The young men who comprised Dhanis' army, and won eastern Congo for Belgium were, in clear ways, simply a late iteration of the *ruga-ruga* of the 1870s and 1880s.<sup>108</sup> As Belgian colonial forces standardized (and in many cases ethnicized) their armed forces, engagements with *ruga-ruga* reached a different zenith.<sup>109</sup> These figures became part of the apparatus of imperial power. No longer tied to regional big men and explorers, these violent laborers served the men of the colonial metropole. For the officers of the Force Publique, the Free State and later Belgian Congo police forces, the legacy of *ruga-ruga* style organization was obvious. These security forces of the emerging Belgian colonial system were not built on metropolitan standards of a disaggregated, multilevel policing and armed forces stratification.<sup>110</sup> Rather the Force Publique “resembled a series of small disconnected military bands” with powerful individual leaders but any other form of “hierarchy was vestigial.”<sup>111</sup> The personalized, relational management structure reproduced the intense forms of dependence on elites that animated many earlier *ruga-ruga* movements.

As colonial forces sought to monopolize violent young labor, African big men either lost control of youth including *ruga-ruga* or joined the colonial apparatus as proxy forces. Emergent structures of indirect rule slowly took hold in the colony, particularly after World War I. Steven Feierman argued that the arrival of colonial rule generally generated, at the regional and local levels, resentment and “contempt” against the newly created structures of “customary

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<sup>108</sup> Dhanis himself was nearly killed by his own troops in a massive mutiny in 1898 before suppressing the individual bands who rejected his authority.

<sup>109</sup> The ethnic construct, “Batetela” formed the base of the Force Publique in Congo.

<sup>110</sup> Bryant P. Shaw, *Force Publique, Force Unique: The Military in the Belgian Congo, 1914-1939* (University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1984), p 47.

<sup>111</sup> Shaw, *Force Publique*, p 18.

authority.”<sup>112</sup> Some of these structures—including the domination of big men and their young followers—were simply reconfigured version of late pre-colonial social formulations. Chiefs, slowly and haltingly, were brought into colonial structures as they paid the state taxes and, crucially, provisioned the Force Publique with young men. A monopoly over the power to marshal youthful violence was ceded to the colonial state.<sup>113</sup> Emerging colonial economic entities in the form of concessionary companies mobilized their own young men for violent work. Force Publique officers sought to preserve the *ruga-ruga* era tactical capacity to “destroy entire regions” that refused entrance into the extractive colonial economy.<sup>114</sup> Domination was aspirational. Real control proved elusive in the face of ongoing self-interested competition between powerful figures at multiple levels and scales. The army also underwent significant restructuring in the early Belgian Congo years, in advance of World War I, culminating in policies that made the Force Publique at least nominally conform to metropolitan standards from 1914.<sup>115</sup>

### **Pacifying Wanande-land North**

*Ruga-ruga* youth, bands, and sometimes “empires” gave way to emerging colonial regimes. European warlords in the region acceded to the state or self-destructed before it. Colonial control was consolidated and enacted. Nonetheless, scattered throughout the Belgian Congo were zones

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<sup>112</sup> Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals*, p 17.

<sup>113</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo* (Duke University Press, 1999), p. 54.

<sup>114</sup> See Shaw, *Force Publique*, chapter one an overview of the significant volume of literature on this era.

<sup>115</sup> Shaw, *Force Publique*, p 65.

of territory yet to be “pacified.” One such region was dominated by Kinande-speakers in the northern part of what is now North Kivu province in the heart of the Albertine Rift zone. The Belgian authorities called this area Wanande Land North. Examining the pacification one of these last pockets of violent anti-colonial resistance brings into our frame a second major form of violence in this era, *Anioto*.

The fighting climaxed in 1897, when Lieutenant Francis Dhanis marched on what is now Beni-Lubero territory with his armed followers, *ruga-ruga*-like bands of Tetela-speaking youth. His aim was to disrupt remnant forces of “Arab” ivory traders whose trading outposts were some 10 kilometers from Butembo at “Katwa, on the northeast corner of Lake Edward, at Kirimi, on the southern slopes of the Ruwenzories; and at Beni, west of the Semliki River.”<sup>116</sup> Kinande-speaking clan groups long dominated all these regions. Dhanis’ campaign was partially successful. His forces destroyed armed men linked with Swahili coast ivory traders. He was unable to continue occupying the region after these victories against “Arabs” and their allies. In part this failure was due to a mutiny within his armed band. In addition, the vacuum created by the disruption of the Zanzibari monopoly over ivory trading created intense battles over this lucrative trade. Space opened up for powerful Kinande-speakers to achieve control over many profitable networks in an economic region that stretched into British territory in Uganda. A low-level guerilla network emerged linking Kinande-speaking big men traders and *ruga-ruga*-like bands. This new formation soon confronted the gathering strength of the colonial state’s armed forces.

The wars between the Force Publique and *ruga-ruga* proved long lived. Growing international humanitarian pressure on King Leopold, the subsequent transfer of sovereignty

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<sup>116</sup> Packard, *Chiefship and Cosmology*, p 140.

from the monarchy to the parliament of Belgium in 1908, and Uganda/Congo border disputes delayed for years Belgian efforts to “penetrate” the Mitumba Mountains and “pacify” these unruly residents of eastern Congo. An imagined final surge of a “pacification” campaign began in 1912. Belgian-led forces established a military encampment at Luhofu to serve as a base of operations.<sup>117</sup> African laborers completed the construction of this *boma* in 1913. Soon after, the campaign to quash Nande insurgencies halted with the onset of World War I. It was only in 1922, in the new context of postwar empire<sup>118</sup> that the Belgian Congo’s forces again turned their attention to a “complete subjugation” of Wanande Land North. Two years of asymmetric fighting followed. The Force Publique finally secured a road from Beni to Butembo and from Beni to the Ugandan border at Kasindi-Mpondwe. The authorities also converted the Lubero military post into a permanent territorial administrative headquarters. In the core zone of conflict—what is now Beni territory—a further four years of overt fighting was required to quash vestiges of visible guerrilla activities.<sup>119</sup> As violence dissipated by 1928, state authorities finally authorized Catholic and Protestant missionaries, who has been operating in the area only in a piecemeal fashion since the 1910s, to set up permanent mission stations. A year later, the first Greek merchant and other trading families began to arrive, lending logistical support to the first Belgian settlers.<sup>120</sup>

The newly subjugated Kinande-speakers, Randall Packard argues, had not leveraged their common linguistic heritage into a shared precolonial political culture. Kinande-speaking groups

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<sup>117</sup> Now Lubero.

<sup>118</sup> Belgium now supervised Ruanda-Urundi as a trusteeship. This was an element of intra-European contestations resolved in League of Nations mandates.

<sup>119</sup> Kabamba, Patience S. “Trading on War: New Forms of Life in the Debris of the State”. Columbia University, 2008, p. 102.

<sup>120</sup> Interview with Andreas Nikoleidas, Kampala, Uganda. December 12, 2016.

shared “very little corporate identity” prior to colonial rule; they were neither “geographically cohesive, nor [shared] totemic or exogamous units.”<sup>121</sup> Nande elders confirm these claims. The oldest argue that umbrella terms currently used for Nande-speakers—“Banande<sup>122</sup> and “Bayira”—are derogatory words linked to the nomenclature of Zanzibari slave traders in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>123</sup> In some Nande zones the absence of any shared precolonial political hierarchy left a shaky basis for the necessary bureaucracies of indirect rule. In others, strong houses and patriarchal regimes proved ready ground for such political transformations. Regardless, in the late 1920s in eastern Congo, chiefdoms, taxation, and residence requirements forced the last of remnants of *ruga-ruga* into colonial coherence. Still the challenges of governance were enormous, and open to much resistance. Emerging chiefs and notables were in need of strategies to control their potentially unruly subjects.

## **Anioto**

As intense wars of “pacification” gave way to the bureaucracies, venal possibilities, and everyday oppressions and opportunities of colonialism, anxieties about colonial subjects persisted. The most vexing fears revolved around the authority figures, at multiple scales, inability to eliminate dangerous “sects” operating in the region. The motives of such movements were difficult for colonial administrators to discern. The most concerning to the colonial

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<sup>121</sup> Randall M. Packard, *Chiefship and Cosmology: An Historical Study of Political Competition* (Indiana University Press, 1981).

<sup>122</sup> Older informants, like Kaserka Thierry Mubenze, interviewed in July 2014, argued that “Nande” derived from the slavers’ Kingwana question “Ba na nde?” [*Whose people (are these)?*] and was crystalized as a catch-all term during colonial rule with little vernacular resonance. Bayira literally mean “black people” in Kinande.

<sup>123</sup> Interview with Regional Clerk Mr. Kasereka Kambale at his office in Beni town, July 3, 2011. Others, however, share the interest of Konzo-speaking relatives in Uganda to produce an irredentist movement to unite Congolese and Uganda Nande/Konzo speakers into a contiguous independent state.

government went by the name of *Anioto*. “The tale of the Anioto Leopards... is enough to make the blood run cold and keep the imaginative awake at nights” wrote an Englishman named T. Alexander Barns while exploring eastern Congo in 1922. In purple prose, Barns described how a “sinister streak of extravagant superstition in their natures has been appealed to in some way by the cannibals known... as the Anioto—which claims many devotees” in eastern Congo.<sup>124</sup> He continued, “The Anioto sect of Human Leopards are amongst their savage customs. These are as singular as any to be met with in Africa today.”<sup>125</sup> In hyperbole, Barns captured the deep fear *Anioto* produced in colonizing agents in the region.

Barns recounted that after *Anioto* killed 128 people, the authorities mounted an expedition to eradicate the movement. While it failed to capture or kill all *Anioto*,

“some interesting facts came to light about the Human Leopards. For instance, it was found that a novitiate of an Anioto consisted in his having to live in the forest alone for eight weeks on food he has to kill or find for himself as best he can, but firstly, before he can enter on this stage of the initiation, it has to be known that he has killed a man of his own tribe. Having accomplished these two feats, he is tattooed on the chest above the Mamhela cicatrizations [healed-over scarification]. A notable Anioto ishumu or ‘high priest,’ who was captured and hanged, had three such cicatrizations on each side of the chest as a mark of his order, and as the identity of the Anioto is unknown save by these cicatrices, everyone is on the look-out for them when passing natives in the forest. Three men have been hanged for being in possession of the Anioto knives.”<sup>126</sup>

Barns account suggests that youth initiates were behind *Anioto* violence—for whom assassination became a source of prestige and a tactic of inclusion into elder male circle.

Colonial nervousness was profoundly provoked by this seemingly inscrutable insurgent movement. The costumed, scarified figures of *Anioto* so agitated European fears that the mere

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<sup>124</sup> T. Alexander Barns, *The Wonderland of the Eastern Congo: The Region of Snow-Crowned Volcanoes, the Pygmies, the Giant Gorilla, and the Okapi* (G.P. Putnam and Sons, 1921) p 204.

<sup>125</sup> Barns, *Wonderland*, p 206.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.



possession of a steel blade led to summary execution in interwar eastern Congo. Despite their fear and fascination, Europeans seemed to have nothing to fear from *Anioto*. *Anioto* never targeted whites. “Fortunately,” wrote Barnes, “the prey of this sect are blacks—principally young and defenseless women and children—not whites.”<sup>127</sup>

This is a key observation. If whites were not the targets of *Anioto* violence then who were, and why? It seems untenable to argue, as Osumaka Likaka, that the rending of bodies at night with claw-shaped knives was an attempt to “restore social harmony and recover local autonomy” in the face of colonial oppression.<sup>128</sup> If this were the case, why were chiefs, colonial sympathizers, and colonists themselves not targeted? Perhaps, instead, *Anioto* was a response by powerful male elites to resentments over emergent “customary authority” in newly pacified eastern Congo. Barn’s observation that the targets of violence were “defenseless women and children” is crucial. *Anioto* murders eliminated and terrorized figures who posed a threat to patriarchal control—unruly sons and belligerent wives and daughters—in the fraught new colonial political culture of customary chiefdoms.

Colonial authority’s nervousness was behind their misinterpretation of *Anioto*. They sought to violently suppress it as an anti-colonial movement targeting foreign figures when in fact *Anioto* were protecting chiefs and state-aligned agents. Colonial anti-*Anioto* campaigns inadvertently became self-defeating. Attacking the *Anioto*, who served the very chiefs the state sought to empower and utilize, in fact aided the true insurgents: anti-chief women and children in eastern Congolese communities. Despite the cost to male elders from anti-*Anioto* actions, the

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 207.

<sup>128</sup> Osumaka Likaka, *Rural Protest: The Mbole Against Belgian Rule, 1897-1959* (International Journal of African historical studies, 1994) p 122.

internal battle for authority within eastern Congolese polities was intense, and the power of *Anioto* was not easily relinquished. The movement proved exceedingly difficult to for the colonial state to erase. In the face of suppression, it took new shades and shapes. Tensions and violence indexed by *Anioto*—triangulated between Belgian officials, the local chiefs that worked with them, and the dissident members of those communities who resisted both forms of authority—persisted for decades.

The new district commissioner of freshly controlled Wanande Land North, soon rechristened Beni-Lubero, reported in the early 1930s that “the Anioto sect remains present in the territory. The natives are more afraid than ever of these leopards who have taken a number of victims ... In 1932 more than 40 natives... were killed by leopard. Several times the population has been in turmoil over this. Unfortunately, many investigations have failed to discover who is behind the leopard-men murders. The execution of Anioto in Aruma and the relegation of Aluta will be a great blow to this sect.”<sup>129</sup> Aluta, a local notable, informed the police in 1927 that his son was murdered by *Anioto*.<sup>130</sup> Over subsequent weeks twenty more were killed in the area that would become Beni territory. Though Aluta’s son was murdered, military figures grew convinced that Aluta was ordering *Anioto* killings himself. Authorities found that Aluta’s son’s death was connected to a deep rivalry between big men in the region who were using *Anioto* to kill dissenters within their communities and murder the loved ones of competing male elites in the region.<sup>131</sup> Despite piecing together what they imagined to be the motives of the killings, the

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<sup>129</sup> Annual report for 1932 on the “Territoire des Wanandes Nord: Beni,” in the *Affaires Indigènes de la Main d’Oeuvre*, (AIMO) box A39: Rapports Congo (45), at the *Archives Africaines, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères* (AA), Brussels, Belgium.

<sup>130</sup> Vicky Van Bockhaven, “The Leopard Men of the Eastern Congo (ca. 1890-1940): History and Colonial Representation” (University of East Anglia, December 2013), p 131.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

state-aligned policing forces were unable to identify suspects who actually carried out the killings. Aluta was relegated for his purported role in the violence despite scant evidence. It is possible that investigations failed to yield suspects because the Congolese customary authorities supporting the investigation were, in fact, aligned with the movement that would protect their own interests and authority.

Our knowledge of *Anioto* is mediated by the rapportage recorded in colonial archives. The fragments and glimpses found on documents are prismatic and potentially misleading, much like the field data that colonial agents struggled to gather and analyze at the time. Colonial investigators found it virtually impossible to solicit witnesses to testify to the identities of *Anioto* killers. In the face of silence and confusion they ultimately “ascribed [much of the killing] to wild animals.”<sup>132</sup>

*Anioto* would continue to be a campaign of disciplinary murder in Beni territory until it was finally driven underground by a campaign of relegation—internal exile—of all suspected members in 1935.<sup>133</sup> Despite this brutal suppression, low-level *Anioto* activities continued for the next decade. The last recorded attacks occurred in 1945.<sup>134</sup> Both the existence and suppression of *Anioto* exposed deep anxieties—of the colonial state and erstwhile partners among African customary authorities—over inability to assert control and mobilize productive labor. *Anioto* violence and colonial counter-insurgency campaigns were at odds, incoherent and counterproductive. In an unacknowledged, but shared concern over dissenting members at the

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid..

<sup>133</sup> “Occupation en territoire des Wanande-Nord (Beni)” in AIMO Box 57-Kibali - Ituri at the AA. It seems there was some kind of revolt in Beni by the “Aniotos” and it was active from 1932-1935 when it was finally put down with the death of some crucial leaders in December of 34.

<sup>134</sup> Annual report for 1932 on the “Territoire des Wanandes Nord: Beni,” in the AIMO box A39: Rapports Congo (45), AA.

bottom of lineage pyramids, state authorities and lineage notables revealed common weaknesses in the “fundamental compatibility” of their strategies of governance.<sup>135</sup>

From florid accounts by figures like Barnas and the framing of *Anioto* as tropical bogeymen in the Belgian popular imagination, from Tintin to menacing statues at the Royal Central African Museum at Tervuren, *Anioto* became a subject of fascination far outside of Congo.<sup>136</sup> Observers on the global political left imagined *Anioto* as the first stirrings of a broad anti-colonial, anti-capitalist movement, going so far as to say, tongue-in-cheek, that “every human-leopard knows the communist manifesto by heart.”<sup>137</sup> *Anioto* was not, however, an ideological movement. Membership was regulated by those already inside. Most were brought in through lineage practices mediated by elders such as “marriage, adoption, exchange, etc.”<sup>138</sup> In what became Beni territory of eastern Congo *Anioto* was inextricably connected to *lusumba* initiatory practices. While not all “young men and children” brought into lineage through *lusumba* became *Anioto*, one could not be mobilized as a leopard-man without passing through the initiation.<sup>139</sup> After initiation, the final test for *Anioto* was to be the murder of an intimate, “often it was the

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<sup>135</sup> Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (Polity, 2009). He discusses this concept on p 262.

<sup>136</sup> See the excellent dissertation by Vicky Von Bockhaven, “The Leopard Men of Eastern Congo” (2013) for much more on histories of *Anioto* representation. Included among these observers was the Belgian comic artist, Hergé (Georges Remi) who gave *Anioto* a role in his book *Tintin au Congo* (1930). An infamous *Anioto* sculpture also appeared prominently in the Africa Museum in Tervuren.

<sup>137</sup> The International, (Johannesburg, South Africa), 01-16-1923, pg 1. Brief review of “The wonderland of Congo” by Mr. T. Alexander Barnas, F.R.G.S., F.Z.S., F.E.S.

<sup>138</sup> Formations Récentes de Sociétés Secrètes au Congo Belge Ed. De Jonghe Africa: Journal of the International African Institute Vol. 9, No. 1 (Jan., 1936), pp. 56-63. From the article: “Quant aux Anioto, hommes léopards, ils forment de petits groupes dont les membres sont connus. La qualité d'anioto n'exige pas une initiation collective; elle passe en général de père en fils. Le Mambela facilite le recrutement des Anioto par mariage, adoption, échange, etc. Les Anioto sont commandés et protégés par le Mambela. Ils sont au service des chefs du Mambela, les exécuteurs de leurs sentences.”

<sup>139</sup> Van Bockhaven, “The Leopard Men of the Eastern Congo (ca. 1890-1940): History and Colonial Representation,” p 98-99.

mother, the wife” of the initiate. That the target of violence would be female kin, not political rivals within or outside lineage, provides more meaningful evidence that *Anioto* was focused on disciplining unruly women and children and not, in particular, about pushing back against colonial order. Elites managed *Anioto* affiliation, and its enduring modalities concerned with bolstering the lineage authority. Long after *Anioto*’s suppression, its avatar—the leopard—an ancient symbol of chiefship and authority remains, deeply connected to discourse around formal political authority in Congo.<sup>140</sup>

In *Anioto*, as in earlier *ruga-ruga* movements, youth served as the primary means of expressing male power in the region. There are key differences, however. *Ruga-ruga*, in Jean-François Bayart’s terminology, was an extraverted force, engaged in establishing linkages and networks that linked people to those outside their own communities and connected with global economic flows.<sup>141</sup> Despite drawing on the same youth for violent labor, *Anioto* figures were likely less concerned with looking outward to engage with other worlds. Instead, elders compelled juvenile males to suppress and displace internal dissent over the decisions and exertions of patriarchal authority. The architects of *Anioto* were primarily concerned with quelling internal dissent, to protect their authority and silence upstart internal critics. *Anioto* was introverted—a disciplinary movement coordinated by lineage leaders with the muscle of their junior male followers.

In these three manifestations—*ruga-ruga*, Force Publique, and *Anioto*—coopted young warriors served the interests of powerful patrons. Against these, another concurrent framework

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<sup>140</sup> More on this but the most obvious examples are Lumumba, Mobutu, Kabila I and many others donning the leopard skin hat, and the leopard’s role in the national army (FARDC) code of arms. Example of the death of leopard in Beni in March 2015 seeming to end curfew and political lockdown in the region.

<sup>141</sup> Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (Polity, 2009), p xxv.

of youth violence was operating. It existed outside, and often functioned against, these forms of authority. Its validating logic was less political authority, but rather access to the powers of the wild, beyond the controls of domestic elders. The figures behind it were the very dissidents that *Anioto* sought to control and, if necessary, destroy. The movement introduces the notion of medicinal power into this dissertation. The medicine of this insurgency was borne by children and persons on the margins. Its users aimed to do violence against those corrupted elder power in the service of the community they belonged to. The archetype of this movement was a powerful mythical figure, a talking baby with astonishing powers. His name was Mwindo.

#### **“A Man Seeking Only Daughters”<sup>142</sup>**

In 1956, Daniel Biebuyck, with several research assistants, collected four “oral traditions” that he aggregated and translated as the *Mwindo Epic*. The epic came from Kinyanga speakers. These people lived to the south of the Kinande-speaking zones of eastern Congo. Biebuyck described the tales he collected in structural functionalist terms: this was a myth reflecting Nyanga-speaking people’s core beliefs and values. The tale is of its time—compiled by Nyanga bards and poets in a 1950s late colonial context. It is simultaneously an enduring narrative that circulated in various forms through the region for generations.

The tale centers on a character named Mwindo, and follows his war against his erstwhile father, Shemwindo. In late colonial Congo, when the story was first written down, the context can be characterized by layered and polyvalent forms of “*reverie*” and “nervousness:” over the

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<sup>142</sup> This summary of Shemwindo’s motives is from David S. Newbury, review of *Review of Hero and Chief: Epic Literature from among the Banyanga (Zaire Republic)*, by Daniel P. Biebuyck, *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Africaines* 15, no. 2 (1981): p 364.

possibilities afforded by impending decolonization, developmentalist and securitized colonial governance tactics, and the paranoia of various authority figures over the potential loss of power. Debates about the future of the colony, what independent Congo might be like, and the trajectory of communities throughout Congo partially revolved around the futures for youth.

Anthropologists working in late colonial Congo, like Mary Douglas, argued that this interest in the role of youth in social reproduction was not new. Youth, she argued, were always key in the stabilization and reproduction of central African societies, not least because of their role in producing wealth for social elders—though that dynamic could take novel forms, as it did with the *ruga-ruga*.<sup>143</sup> Along with economic production, elders sought to manage reproduction. Young women brought forth the next generation of juniors who would produce wealth through labor or exchange. Youth were the base of “wealth in people,” and social elders sought to consolidate them for themselves and their lineages.<sup>144</sup> However, because youth controlled productive power, Douglas argued they “held the whip hand...in saying how much they could contribute to the productive side of the economy.”<sup>145</sup> If elders abused their power, by engaging in excessive accumulation for example, youth would respond by fleeing from or confronting authorities, causing elites to accuse one another of having “driven the youth away,” threatening the community’s survival.<sup>146</sup> Douglas, drawing on work by Shmuel Eisenstadt,<sup>147</sup> argued that

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<sup>143</sup> Mary Douglas, *The Lele of Kasai* (International African Institute, 1963). I also build this part of my argument largely from the work of my preliminary exam paper on youth in central African history.

<sup>144</sup> Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff eds, *Slavery in Africa: historical and anthropological perspectives*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1977.

<sup>145</sup> Douglas, Mary. *The Lele of the Kasai*. International African Institute. 1963, p. 102.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

<sup>147</sup> Eisenstadt, Shmuel. *From Generation to Generation*. The Free Press. 1956.

intergenerational tensions presented the greatest threat to lineage-based societies, particularly in moments where “the social maturity of youth was deliberately delayed by men who controlled wealth, wives or [customary] office.”<sup>148</sup> We see here, again, shades of the social upheavals associated with South Africa’s *mfecane* and the militarization of “frozen” age sets in armies of big men like Shaka.<sup>149</sup> In light of such dynamics, members of competing age-sets would be in conflict and the period would be “characterized by hostility between the generations.”<sup>150</sup>

The *Mwindo Epic* captured key elements of the late colonial moment in northeastern Congo. It narrates a time when the dynamic described by Mary Douglas began to break down: labor and reproduction shortages perpetually vexed the authorities, and both young people’s aspirations and elders’ venal overreach threatened communal stability.<sup>151</sup> The growing need for workers in mines, and on coffee, quinine, and tea plantations in the region made the provisioning of young laborers a tense and fraught process. The resettlement of Rwandans in the 1940s and late 1950s, in response to famine and the need for more workers in eastern Congo, produced deep resentments and violence between Kinyarwanda-speakers and other groups living in the Kivu Rift. Chiefs complicit in such migrations and resettlements were sometimes seen as “selling out” their people and their land to dangerous outsiders for their own profit. This dynamic

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<sup>148</sup> Douglas, *Lele*, p 83.

<sup>149</sup> Elizabeth A. Eldredge, “Sources of Conflict in Southern Africa, c. 1800–30: The ‘Mfecane’ Reconsidered,” *The Journal of African History* 33, no. 01 (March 1992): 1, Elizabeth A. Eldredge, *The Creation of the Zulu Kingdom, 1815–1828* (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

<sup>150</sup> Douglas, *Lele*, p 83.

<sup>151</sup> Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo*; Nancy Rose Hunt, “Noise over Camouflaged Polygamy, Colonial Morality Taxation, and a Woman-Naming Crisis in Belgian Africa,” *The Journal of African History* 32, no. 3 (1991): 471–494; Nancy Rose Hunt, “‘Le Bebe En Brousse’: European Women, African Birth Spacing and Colonial Intervention in Breast Feeding in the Belgian Congo,” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 21, no. 3 (1988): 401–432.



recurred for generations in eastern Congo, across decolonization, and stimulated increasing tensions within communities under new political and economic arrangements.

In the tale of Mwindo, his primary antagonist is his father. Shemwindo is a venal chief whose decisions can be interpreted as a distillation of the toxic dynamics described above. The epic tale begins with a powerful illustration of Shemwindo's passion for accumulating wealth and prestige at the expense of lineage juniors. In an opening scene, Shemwindo gathers all his followers—wives, daughters, counsellors, and male juniors—and orders that they murder any male child born to any of them. He says: “All of you must each time give birth to girls only.”<sup>152</sup> With this proclamation Shemwindo seeks to eliminate the possibility of a lineage junior threatening his absolute control of wealth and power among his followers. Shemwindo's murderous proclamation rejects his obligation and responsibility to rising juniors. He seeks instead the annihilation of male competition. His venality extends to all manner of corruptions: he consorts with dangerous water serpents and spirit beings to acquire wealth, and gives his female relatives in marriage to unworthy suitors for his exclusive personal benefit. Nonetheless, his fame grows due to his extravagant prestige expenditures, and his violent suppression of young males in his community allows him to avoid dividing his plunder. He continues to consolidate his enormous wealth.

When one of his wives becomes pregnant, she fears she might give birth to a son and be compelled to kill him. Her concerns diminish as she realizes her fetus is immensely powerful, fetching her water and raw vegetables while still *in utero*.<sup>153</sup> It is to this woman, the chief's

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<sup>152</sup> Bieybuck, *Mwindo Epic*, p 42.

<sup>153</sup> Luc De Heusch, *Le Roi Ivre Ou l'origine de l'Etat*, vol. 1 (Gallimard, 1972); Luc De Heusch, “What Shall We Do with the Drunken King?,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 45, no. 4 (1975): 363–72. In this scholarship De Heusch, a prominent structuralist anthropologist, reconstructs a “symbolic code” from Luba-Lunda kingship myths. He focuses, in part, on childbirth and the “semantic field of colors” triangulated between black, white and red, that such myths index. De Heusch argued

seventh and most favored wife, that a son is “born at the time of [the baby’s] own choosing,” emerging from the middle finger of his mother’s right hand rather than through the birth canal. Mwindo’s name emerged at birth—not bestowed by any adult—and means “Little-One-Just-Born-He-Walked.”<sup>154</sup> At birth he spoke, laughed, and carried a scepter in one hand and an axe in the other. Right away Shemwindo heard of his son’s arrival and wife’s disloyal refusal to kill Mwindo. The chief arrived at the birth site to murder Mwindo with his own spear. After many attempts, he is unable to destroy the child, and Mwindo issues a judgment on his father:

*Mwindo shouted up the sky, “I am Mwindo, the little one just born, he walked. Hatred fills my heart! I have come to take vengeance upon my father... may he become as dead as dry leaves. My father’s counselors and nobles failed to advise him well. May they become as dead as dry leaves. My father’s villagers supported him... may they become as dead as dry leaves...”*

Shemwindo is unmoved by his infant son’s obvious power and precocious speech. He replies:

*“Why should I fear the power of a small boy who comes alone to fight us?” he exclaimed. “If he comes any farther, we’ll cut his throat and send his life rushing forth from his body.”*

*“You are wrong,” the villagers said. “Small though he is, Mwindo is more powerful than we are. He will force us to run from our own village! Do not stand against your son!”*

Shemwindo and his cadre of male elites refuse to head the chorus of constituents. Instead, they seek continually to end Mwindo’s life. This is not an easy task. The campaign to destroy Mwindo reveals deep divisions within the community. Throughout the tale Mwindo gathers strength from allies outside of gerontocratic authority structures: marginalized women, forest animals, lightning, and power objects. From these figures and forces on the margins, Mwindo builds a coalition against his father’s corrupt leadership. Despite his growing strength, Mwindo’s

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that childbirth, and especially the blood substances associated with childbirth, situated this acts as somewhere between “menstruation,” connected to cycles of domesticity, and “the hunt” associated with male engagements to subject forces of “the wild.”

<sup>154</sup> Newbury, “Review of Heros,” p/ 365.

beloved and betrothed, the beautiful Iyangura, serves as a check on Mwindo's own instincts to consolidate power. She continually challenges Mwindo's own hubris as he brings together his followers and gathers the experience he needs to be prepared to challenge his father. Her counsel compels him to produce his first settlement though he initially denies the responsibility to provide stable living spaces for his followers. Iyangura's prodding results in Mwindo converting forest to village by verbal command. She is not always listened to, however; Mwindo's passive-aggressive humming to himself sometimes drowned out her insightful critique. Inyangura serves to redirect Mwindo when he begins to follow a path that would lead him toward Shemwindo-like self-interested, anti-social, accumulative practices.

The source of Mwindo tale's power comes from how it inverts expectations—a topsy-turvy take on how political authority should be won. Mwindo ultimately takes control from his father and ends Shemwindo's immoral reign. Mwindo is never authorized to do so by another man, nor granted power by a lineage elder, nor is he initiated into domestic authority. Instead, as a newborn, he possesses tremendous power provided solely by forces of the wild: forest objects, lightning, animals and women peripheral to the centers of political power. Small though he was, he powerfully unraveled the social order, ended the domestic status quo, and ushered in a new era. His final acts of reconstitution and social renewal of elder male dominated hierarchy coincide with an abdication of access to the spirits, substances, and advisors that provide his potent powers as a child.

The story suggests that key sources of unmaking and remaking power reside within figures who are perceived as immature. This representation of mythological, potentially socially transformative, power helps explain the targets of intense violence by *Anioto* figures in eastern Congo's history. The power of Mwindo-figures, concealed amongst the politically weakest in

society, could undo the authority of the most established, wealthy gerontocrats in society. *Anioto* was not simply oppression of the socially weak—rather it was an attempt to suppress the potentially devastating nexus of women and children’s access to “wild” energies that could bring big man power to its knees.

### **Ethnography and the Epic**

This argument emerges partly by reading with and against anthropological field work conducted by Randall Packard among Kinande-speaking people in the 1970s. Packard’s work, coming a generation after the *Mwindo Epic*’s collection helps place the tale within a regional political culture, and situates the tale more firmly within a historical milieu. Packard, who conducted fieldwork as a student of Steven Feierman, argued that the key social and political tension animating “Nande cosmology” lay between *eka* (domesticated homesteads) and *ekisoki* (bush areas) “inhabited by untamed and chaotic elements of nature, including powerful medicines and spirits.”<sup>155</sup> He suggested that the hallmarks of patriarchy and gerontocracy, including chiefship, agrarian production, male fertility and orderly community life, were under the domain of *eka*. The power needed to bring rains and exert control over elements of power key to social welfare, however, could not be accessed without managing the chaotic *ekisoki* forces of the bush, the wild, and femininity. Balancing these forces was the responsibility of ritual experts who could ensure a “utopia of absolute health” if they were effective, or threaten the very integrity of society if they lapsed in their duties.<sup>156</sup> Chiefly figures, like Shemwindo, bore final responsibility

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<sup>155</sup> Packard, *Chiefship and Cosmology*, 72. Packard is drawing, in part, on the foundational work of his dissertation advisor, Stephen Feierman’s work on Shambaa kingdom and, in particular, the division between wild and domestic power.

<sup>156</sup> Packard, *Chiefship*, 27. While the *Mwindo Epic* appears in the bibliography, Packard does not directly site the source in this monograph. That said, the implicit argument is that these notions of power and authority were circulating in the region, at least in the minds of those who recounted the epic to Bieybuck.

for ensuring balance between these fields of power and protecting community from the dangers of slipping toward extremes. When male elites sought to overemphasize the power of *eka*, a counter-power emerged from *ekisoki* to stabilize society again. Within this reading, we can see how the figure of Mwindo condenses<sup>157</sup> such a polysemic gendered, wild force brought to bear against the excessive accumulation of *eka* power by venal chiefs, like Shemwindo.

For Packard, women were vital boundary figures between domains of power. Childbearing women were important “liminal figures” in Nande cosmology as they were both “members of the homestead... [and had] strong associations with the world of the bush.”<sup>158</sup> This liminality made women susceptible to spiritual dangers from *ekisoki*, “frequently possessed by spirits of the bush that cause sickness and death in the homestead.”<sup>159</sup> Possession was worrisome since a “woman’s violation of social prohibitions” or “her susceptibility to possession by forces of the bush can result in the introduction of malevolent spirits into the homestead and thus in misfortune.”<sup>160</sup> Male elders sought to limit the influence of bush forces in domestic spheres by exerting control of women. Women could also leverage possession and illness to push back against men who overstepped the healthy boundaries of their own authority.

An additional method used by women to manage their liminality for productive social benefit was through childbirth. When balanced, child rearing brought infants from the forces of the wild into the bounds of the homestead, where they were taught the values of social order and hierarchy. The greater the social maturity of the child, the less access they had to the power and

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<sup>157</sup> Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Aldine Publishers, 1969), p 52.

<sup>158</sup> Packard, *Chiefship*, pp 44-45.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Packard, *Chiefship*, pp 29-30.

productive energies of the wilds. At the same time, they pursued avenues for accessing domestic authority. Elite men needed to access—“borrow”— power of the wilds from women and children to succeed in war. This included the use of juvenile’s themselves in combat. Some, however, then sought to escape the burden of obligations such borrowings demanded. These figures refused their responsibilities of sharing and reciprocity. These were men like Shemwindo. In the *Mwindo Epic*, children and child birthing women in eastern Congo were at the crux of social tensions, riding the boundary between wild and domestic power—both helping to constitute and manage male elder authority.

In light of these observations, Mwindo’s exceptionality becomes specific and obvious. His uniqueness lay not simply in his remarkable powers; he embodied both wild (child, female, dangerous, powerful, illness) and domestic (adult, male, productive, disciplinary) powers. He held these disparate forces simultaneously and from birth. Mwindo’s position was fraught and dangerous, born of the spontaneous reaction of *ekisoki* forces to the corruption of lineage elders, and ripe with potential for social renewal and regeneration through renewal of the *eka*. In the epic, people continually acknowledge Mwindo’s transformational potential, and are attracted to his duality and uniqueness. “Mwindo was devoured by the many longing eyes.”<sup>161</sup> What protects Mwindo from temptation – falling prey to the same venal logics of power as his father—was his age and his compatriots. As a child, albeit an exceptional one, Mwindo was imagined to be in a state of *before*—uncorrupted by the temptations of domestic power, without aspirations beyond revenge against his father and the renewal of Mwindo’s community. The assumption was that a child’s temporality and horizons of expectation were profoundly shallow, bound by the

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<sup>161</sup> Bieybuck, *Mwindo Epic*, pg 58.

present.<sup>162</sup> Venality, self-interest, individual accumulation and the aggregation of followers was not yet the dominate mode of decision-making for the young. Rather, theirs was an interest in securing bounds of reciprocity and management of the obligations of hierarchy. They wanted responsible fathers. They sought to restore the proper scope of *eka* power, not end it. This tension was critically important. For the young, and other dependents, imbricating *within* the social was of primary concern, where for the lineage leader establishing and maintaining individual prestige was central.

One observer of Kinande-speaking societies in decolonizing eastern Congo suggested that when a child is acting in a seemingly political fashion, “no power relation is assumed.”<sup>163</sup> Children were prestige figures as followers, but not yet productive or socially reproductive. Children indexed power—and a capacity for a social future, if not of their own making or envisioning. So, it was not *in spite of* Mwindo’s immaturity that he represented power. His power could be interpretive as politically pure—the bush was open to him because he was not engaged in domestic authority. His age and inexperience did not allow for the kinds of political and economic self-interest that consumed his father. The epic presents a tale in which only a child, a figure like Mwindo, could renew society in the face of corrupted elders—reestablishing a healthy future for all of society.

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<sup>162</sup> The notion of the “horizon of expectation” is from Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (Columbia University Press, 1985).

<sup>163</sup> Mukohya Vwakyankazi, “African Traders In Butembo, Eastern Zaire (1960-1980): A Case Study of Informal Entrepreneurship in a Cultural Context of Central Africa” (The University of Wisconsin - Madison, 1982), p 78.

In the climax of the *Mwindo Epic*, the hero becomes a full adult, renowned, and victorious over his father, though he spares his life. His final words in the epic are directed towards followers who now accept him as their leader:

*Grow many crops of many foods. Live in good houses and make your village beautiful. Agree with one another, for argument is the path to anger and hatred. Do not pursue another's spouse, for the man who seduces another man's wife will be killed. Onfo, the god of creation, gives only what is good to you. Accept all of your children, whether they are male or female, tall or short, healthy or disabled. Be considerate of the sick person who walk along the village paths. Accept, fear, and protect your chief as he should accept, fear, and protect you.*

The bards of the *Mwindo Epic* sketched out a utopian ideal in its finale. Political authorities accept and fear their charges, even as the people accept and fear their leaders. Tension remained at the core of social order. Balance was reestablished, and the entire community was responsible for its maintenance.

These kinds of stories are products of time and place, told to particular constituencies in order to address pressing concerns. For whom, then, was the *Mwindo Epic* meant to be performed? Some clues emerge from its provenance. There were 27,000 Kinyanga speakers in the 1950s as the tale was collected—a relatively small language group.<sup>164</sup> The full performance of the story took place in 1956, and required twelve days of song and dance to complete. Only for the benefit of Biebuyck was it reduced to an oral recitation by a single speaker. The bard tasked with distilling the tale, Kandi Rureke, was a key informant and provided much of the structuration that shaped the final written epic. Other elements of tale were compiled and synthesized from three other separate tellings of the story by Kinyanga-speaking bards named

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<sup>164</sup> According to Kahomobo Mateene, the co-editor of the epic, the “Banyanga” were a “cousin” subgroup to the much larger Hunde-speaking community.



Sherungu, Shekarisi, and Shekwabo. Biebuyck and his collaborator, a young Hunde-speaking scholar, Kahombo Mateene—who would later earn a PhD in linguistics from the Sorbonne and lead the African Union’s Center for African Languages—translated, synthesized, and edited the tales into a single, richly annotated account. The epic possesses similarities, in both the format and content, to the *kubandwa* songs collected and analyzed by, among others, Neil Kodesh his monograph on public healing in Buganda.<sup>165</sup> These were preponderant, complex, sung tales prevalent throughout the inter-lacustrine region.<sup>166</sup>

Beibuyck’s interpretation was that Mwindo was about chiefly succession. There are obvious warning’s in the tale against venality and corruption. This interpretation is enriched by noting that those who performed the tale were advisors to the chief. The bards sung reminders of chiefly obligation for the benefit of leaders. No doubt, however, Mwindo performances were also opportunities to narrate the ideals of moral community in the tumultuous late colonial context. Its content also suggests an ideal constituency—loyal but also willing to challenge unjust authority. In sum, the *Mwindo Epic*’s meanings are polyvalent, but revolve around utopian ideals propounded in a time of social and political complexity.

As the tale concludes, Mwindo reaches adulthood. He endured a phase of wild power and used its force to inherit the burdens and opportunities of domestic political authority. As the embodiment of an ideal lineage senior, he no longer sought to draw on potentially corrupting force from the wild and, likely, no longer could, given his imbrication in the world of the *eka*. Instead he drew support from his followers and agreed to protect them from one another and to

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<sup>165</sup> Neil Kodesh, *Beyond the Royal Gaze: Clanship and Public Healing in Buganda* (University of Virginia Press, 2010) p 122.

<sup>166</sup> Shane Doyle, “The Cwezi-Kubandwa Debate: Gender, Hegemony and Pre-Colonial Religion in Bunyoro, Western Uganda,” *Africa* 77, no. 04 (November 2007): 559–81.

make space for difference and weakness. Mwindo embodied the big man, if a conscientious and generous one. A prophecy of his ascension was fulfilled, a lineage loop closed, a cycle ended, and another begun. The warning was clear for Mwindo: a future chief in his lineage could, if accumulation and exclusion prove too great temptations, be born an upstart child to challenge his venality and, if necessary, remove him from the seat of authority.

## **Conclusion**

The *Mwindo Epic*, as gathered by Biebuyck and Mateene, was the product of enduring and durable frameworks and debates. It was told at a particular time and within a specific place in Congo's history. Bards spoke and sung the story a decade before the emergence of a massive *mai*-medicine based insurgency took most of the country. The *mai* medicine, as will be discussed in chapter five, drew deeply from reserves of wild power to challenge the venality of male elites. The sentiments and moods that Mwindo evoked—focused on concerns over elders consolidating power in an antisocial fashion – was in the decolonizing air. The tale was recited a decade after the last *Anioto* campaigns terrorized many in the region: Belgian state officials, customary authorities, and lineage juniors and women alike. It was performed in living memory of *ruga-ruga* movements that found new, if not novel, forms within the colonial apparatus. The bards of the tale sought, in part, to paint a portrait of ideal relations within a lineage framework. Their art suggested moral power could be regulated through the exertions of youthful violence in times of venality and corrupt authority. Such stories implicitly worked against dangers posed by *Anioto* and *ruga-ruga*, both of which could bolster, even expand, elite male venality. Instead the performance of Mwindo evoked a yearning for internal balance—the right ordering of society,

responsibility, and age progression. The focus was not on the antisociality of Shemwindo, but rather on the renewing power of Mwindo.

Why does this chapter triangulate three different movements of juvenile violence across scales, time periods, and actor groups, given the inevitable incommensurability such an approach produces? In placing these three movements—*ruga-ruga*, *Anioto*, and Mwindo-like insurgencies—in the same frame two key moves are made. First, it aims to disaggregate, with historical evidence, a seemingly similar kind of action: violence wrought by young men. It pulls apart a type of intergenerational engagement—big men and junior boys engaging in conflict over authority—that is often conflated in historical and contemporary analysis. Despite surface similarities between such movements, this chapter has revealed the polysemic quality of such movements. *Ruga-ruga* movements engagements were often extraverted, concerned with establishing economic control of key supply chains through coercion and complicities between elders and juniors. It always also sought to bring throngs of new followers and subjects into emerging constituencies. *Ruga-ruga* was also about exerting authority over novel polities and economies. These elements were introverted but unstable—less successful in stability than in growth. Often youth and male seniors collaborated, if incompletely and in complex ways, via the frame of *ruga-ruga*.

Second, arguing that *Anioto* sought to discipline internal dissidence suggests we must resist attempts in the colonial archive to read such movements as insurgencies. *Anioto* was, at least in part, meant to prevent and quash potential rebelliousness, not engender it. Juvenile violence is as complex as the forms of disorder it seeks to redress or invoke. The materials, initiatory practices, and substances of *Anioto* were not medicine. They were emblematic of male, elder power—*Anioto* was, in part, a technique of governance. *Anioto* sought to discipline the

homestead by exaggerating its regulations and disciplinary regimes—sharpening to a razor edge the power of customary authority. By contrast, the logic of Mwindo, even as it deals with the same social problem of breakdown between chiefly power and core constituencies, connects deeply to the logic of *mai* medicine. We will see that *mai* was used against elites. The violence wrought by its wielders was often terrible, destructive and ruinous. At the same time, it also followed in the frame of Mwindo: one goal was to restore relations of reciprocity. This framing suggests that movements that drew on *mai* were a direct rejoinder to *Anioto*-like violence, and the systems such violence supported. *Mai* functioned as check on male, adult, lineage and state-based power movements. Mwindo's story, read with Packard's ethnography, shows how this violence can be at once ruinous, socially constitutive, and functioned as generative, radical, internally directed critique.

### Chapter Three: Lost Children in the Belgian Congo, 1929-1960

In late 1957, a panic permeated the Belgian Congo's sole children's prison. The National Penitentiary for Delinquent Youth at Niangara, a decades long colonial experiment in the "carceral techniques" of juvenile rehabilitation, was to suddenly and unexpectedly close.<sup>167</sup> The Penitentiary's demise was frantic, set into motion with the filing of a damning inspection report months earlier. The author, P. Borie, hoped to report to colonial administrators that the Penitentiary was fulfilling its purpose: turning wayward youth into productive adults under the guidance of Dominican Fathers. Borie found, instead, a community seething with abuse, violence, and predation.

"It is obvious," he wrote, "that under current conditions we cannot be talking about moral reeducation."<sup>168</sup> He recommended immediate closure, the transfer of all inmates, and total overhaul of the prison's hierarchy. "Pending the results of these reforms, we should focus on the gravest problem at hand, namely the contamination of the not-yet-perverted elements in contact with ordinary inmates. The only remedy... is segregation."<sup>169</sup> To Borie, the "ordinary" criminal children of Niangara were vectors of viral perversity. All would inevitably be corrupted, even those who were "not-yet" affected. Far from reformed—"morally reeducated"—the

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<sup>167</sup> I use this term following Nancy Rose Hunt in *A Nervous State: Violence, Remedies, and Reverie in Colonial Congo*. Duke University Press, 2015. Hunt works within the register of the carceral from Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*.

<sup>168</sup> "Colonie Pénitentiaire pour jeunes délinquants a Niangara" report by the *Service Provincial des Affaires Politiques Administratives et Judiciaires (SCPAPAJ)*, AIMO GG 16.611.

<sup>169</sup> "Colonie Pénitentiaire" (*SCPAPAJ*), AIMO GG 16.611.

Penitentiary's population were voraciously pathogenic: uncontrollably toxic. The Dominicans failed, the criminal children were unreformed, and the Penitentiary, in this official reckoning, was a disaster. In its final months, Niangara essentially functioned as a temporary quarantine center for the "perversion" of young inmates who awaited transfer to far-flung facilities across the Belgian Congo.

In the same period, elsewhere in eastern Congo, another project of youth reform was imploding. A dominant Protestant missionary figure, Paul Hurlburt, was facing an insurrection within the church he established at Katwa near Butembo, a city perched on the escarpment of the western Rift Valley near the Uganda border. In the late 1920s, as Belgian officials were first conceptualizing colonial child prisons, Hurlburt and his colleagues in the Unevangelized Africa Mission (UAM) among the first Euromericans to arrive in the newly "pacified" parts of eastern Congo, drawn by a sense of spiritual calling to this "savage area."<sup>170</sup> Their background in missions in Kenya left them yearning for frontiers where conditions were difficult and the gospel not yet preached. As hundreds of porters hefted their possessions, the missionaries arrived in the Albertine Rift zone with visions of transforming a generation of wayward youth into passionate evangelists for the Kingdom of God.<sup>171</sup> Unlike Niangara's overseers, they believed change would never come via the state through pedagogy, but rather that renewal needed to come from within the soul, through purified spirits. Early converts came to evangelical rallies to receive small gifts of salt from the missionaries. After a time many were convinced to take on the waters of baptism.

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<sup>170</sup> "Interview with Paul Frederick Hurlburt Jr.," pt 1. November 8, 1990 in box CN 438 in Billy Graham Center (BCN) Archive, Wheaton, Illinois.

<sup>171</sup> Nelson, Jack E. 1992. *Christian Missionizing and Social Transformation: A History of Conflict and Change in Eastern Zaire*. Greenwood Publishing Group.56.

Thirty years later, many of those converted as children mounted an ecclesiastical insurgency against Hurlburt and his peers. Young men once called *Bahorobe*—Hulbert’s people—were now furious with their erstwhile mentor. His stubborn intransigence to ceding control of the church to Congolese leadership compelled an attempt to remove him from his position with violence.<sup>172</sup> As Hurlburt made his way toward the pulpit on a Sunday morning in June of 1960, one the eve of national independence, a former protégée named Gabriel Kulala blocked his path.

Kulala demanded Hurlburt allow church affairs to be overseen by Congolese leaders. Hurlburt refused. Kulala and his allies forced Hurlburt and his family from the church. Youth encircled them outside, gathering rocks to throw at the missionaries. The Hurlburt family entered their car for safety. Former “mission boys”<sup>173</sup> heaved stones at the vehicle shouting, “The day of mercy is over.”<sup>174</sup> The missionaries drove through the angry crowd to their compounds. They called on the state for protection. Authorities placed soldiers at mission enclaves and churches to prevent the ecclesiastical rebels from taking control of these spaces or harming the American missionaries.

As conflict continued to stew, two leaders of the insurgent group would write a letter to John F. Kennedy, asking the American president to control the missionaries: “we ask you... to recommend to your compatriots to treat us like men.”<sup>175</sup> For these infantilized congregants, a

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<sup>172</sup> Nelson, *Missionizing*, p 56.

<sup>173</sup> This term was used in the parochial world of colonial Congo to describe seemingly kinless children who came to live, formally or informally, in or around a mission station. For an image of these figures: “Mission Boys Outside a Tent, Congo, ca.1920-1949: International Mission Photography Archive, University of Southern California.1860-ca.1960.” 2016.

<sup>174</sup> Nelson, *Missionizing*, p 2.

<sup>175</sup> Letter written by Bakulu Lawy and Mangolopa Luc, to Mr. John Kennedy, 28 May 1962, from CBMFS Archives in Wheaton, Illinois, Cited in Nelson, *Missionizing*, on page 176.

time of reckoning was at hand; justice was coming to the church. Those who joined the church as small boys were finally to be treated “like men.” Others in the community were not convinced by these arguments. They did not celebrate the pressure placed on Hurlburt and his allies, nor would they join or support the insurgents. Instead, these individuals were loyal to missionary authority. For them, it was not just justice that was coming, but rather a great evil. One among them denounced his revolutionary peers: “Satan entered them, like he did Judas.”<sup>176</sup>

During these last days of the colonial era, thirty years of different forms of youth reform unraveled in eastern Congo amidst rich metaphors of viral contagion, demonic possession, and spiritual emancipation.<sup>177</sup> Powerful male figures in the state and in the church were struggling to contain the perverse wildness and evil of unruly juniors. They could not know this era was simply the beginning of a time of chaos. Nor could they imagine that in 1964, in the decade of Hurlbert’s attack and the closure of Niangara, these intense moments of insurgency, accusation, and confusion would be eclipsed by a paroxysm of youth violence so total it would mark, for life, the memories of all who encountered it: the Simba Rebellion.

This chapter analytically links the failures of Dominican “moral reeducation” at Niangara, the collapse of works by Hurlburt and other UAM evangelists, and the emergence of Simba warriors in 1964. It traces colonial precedents for the motivations and actions of the thousands of children who made war in 1964. At core is a question of causation. Can we locate

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<sup>176</sup> Nelson, Jack E. 1992. *Christian Missionizing and Social Transformation: A History of Conflict and Change in Eastern Zaire*. Greenwood Publishing Group, p 2.

<sup>177</sup> The geography of this chapter is bound broadly by the “bend in the river” in the west, where the Congo takes a 90 degree turn south. On the east the terrain ends at the Rwenzori Mountain range that straddles the contemporary boundary between Uganda and Congo. The northern boundary is the Uele River, and the Tshopo River to the south. In the colonial era this was Kibale-Iture, Kivu, and Stanleyville areas. The region of focus in this dissertation is bracketed in the colonial era, by two mining projects. To the south is the MGL mines near what is now Butembo. To the north is the Kilo Moto mines, the second largest mine company in the colonial era.



antecedents to the Simba movement's overwhelming young constituencies of warriors in the overlapping disciplinary relationships between young people and adults in the state and church in Belgian Congo?

By tracing the ways colonial adults sought to imagine, constitute, and shepherd wayward youth through thresholds of redemption and maturation, precedents may be glimpsed. We return to where the chapter began, a place built precisely to enable such processes of transformation: the National Penitentiary for Delinquent Youth at Niangara.

### **Niangara**

Colonial-era Niangara was a zone of incarceration.<sup>178</sup> On the banks of Uele River, where the thick of the Congo Basin rain forest gives way to savannah, Niangara is otherwise best known for the discovery of bird species.<sup>179</sup> Its remoteness made it an effective site for a particular form of colonial punishment: domestic penal exile. It was an ideal site for housing subjects of *relégué*. The administrators of the Belgian Congo established national prisons for men and women for such purposes there in the early 1910s. These prisons became sites of state concern a decade later when officials feared Lugabra-speaking inmates had an unspecified, perhaps psychosomatic, disease that caused them to perish under incarceration.<sup>180</sup> They were released *en masse*—deemed intrinsically incapable of withstanding the strains of incarceration.

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<sup>178</sup> The town, named after a chief encountered at its future site on the banks of the Uele River by the Zanzibari trader and slaver Tippu Tip in 1888, was little else. See David Northrup, 1988. *Beyond the Bend in the River: African Labor in Eastern Zaire, 1865-1940*. Ohio University, p 26.

<sup>179</sup> James Paul Chapin et al., "The Birds of the Belgian Congo. Part 4 / by James P. Chapin. Bulletin of the AMNH ; v. 75B," 1954.

<sup>180</sup> David Northrup, *Beyond the Bend in the River: African Labor in Eastern Zaire, 1865-1940* (Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1988), p 168.

Niangara's officials later experimented with the possibility of using prison populations to alleviate Congo's chronic labor shortages. The wardens availed inmates for hire to private enterprises in the region. The effort was of limited economic success and was ultimately abandoned. Beyond these episodes, however, Niangara's prisons appeared unexceptional, functioning much like other penal sites in the state. Difficult work, the passage of time, and the stresses of isolation characterized the carceral experience of most inmates.<sup>181</sup> This changed when state officials selected Niangara as the site for the sole children's prison ever built in the colony.

The project commenced in October 1931 when Governor-General Auguste Tilkens signed Ordinance Number 76/J into law. It mandated that children be henceforth separated from adults in the colony's prisons.<sup>182</sup> Further, the decree stipulated that "when local authorities consider it appropriate, and material conditions allow" detention centers specifically designed for criminal children were to be constructed. The ordinance, intended for comprehensive application across the Congo, lacked detail. Boundaries between categories of "child" and "adult" were not specifically delineated. What a *children's* penal colony should be, contra a prison for adults, was not elaborated.

These lapses, and the decree's broad vagueness, evidence hasty preparation. Such oversights are surprising given the significant legal precedent around the standards and goals of children's incarceration in the metropole, Belgium. The criminality of children was a subject of significant interest there due, in part, to surge in popularity of the work of the scholar Adolphe Quetelet. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Quetelet became Belgium's social quantifier *par excellence*,

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<sup>181</sup> Florence Bernault and Janet Lee Roitman, *A History of Prison and Confinement in Africa* (Heinemann, 2003).

<sup>182</sup> Tilkens was a decorated Army officer who, as noted by a colleague, Norbert Laude, consistently demonstrate an 'apparent coldness' in his demeanor " Académie Royale des Sciences d'Outre-Mer Biographie Belge d'Outre-Mer, T. VI, 1968, col. 1004-1011.

an innovator of Comptean “social physics,” who undertook the work of measuring bodies and minds in pursuit of his human ideal: the “average man.” A surge of publically available demographic information in the 1820s provided the evidentiary grist for Quetelet’s explorations.<sup>183</sup> To Quetelet, the average man was the “mean about which oscillate the social elements; he is, so to speak, a fictitious being for whom all things proceed conformably to the average results obtained for society.”<sup>184</sup> The average man was, to Quetelet, at the apex of humanity’s Gaussian distribution—less Platonic form than distillation of the mean. Obsession with the average drove Quetelet’s attentions toward the outlying figures on the tailings of humanity’s imagined distribution curve. These abnormal individuals threatened the social entire order—affecting the mean itself. Their existence strained the very integrity of the nation. Most dangerous of all were criminals. To Quetelet, these constituted the great enemy of society. Normative positivism drove him to create, *inter alia*, a proto criminologist.

He first developed the concept of the “average man” in his “Study on the Penchant for Crime at Various Ages,” though this interest is evident throughout his work.<sup>185</sup> His most famous work, *Treatise on Man and the Development of his Faculties* contained a chapter on “the development of the propensity to crime.”<sup>186</sup> His attempts to quantify “pencnants” and “propensities” toward crime led Quetelet to produce the first recorded criminal profiling system used by Belgian law enforcement. He found it was the “young, male, poor, uneducated, or unemployed” who were “the most likely to be arrested and convicted of a crime.”<sup>187</sup> These likely

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<sup>183</sup> Frank E. Hagan, *Introduction to Criminology: Theories, Methods, and Criminal Behavior* (SAGE, 2010), p 106.

<sup>184</sup> This is a translation by Frank Hamilton Hankins from 1908 in his *Adolphe Quetelet as Statistician*. Columbia University, Longmans, Green & Company, agents.

<sup>185</sup> Hankins, *Introduction to Criminology*, p 64.

<sup>186</sup> Quetelet, Adolphe. “A Treatise on Man and the Development of His Faculties.” 1842. *Cambridge University Press*.

future criminals were cast alongside an array of social undoers: the suicidal, those prone to divorce, the short, the weak, the overweight, and the slow-witted.<sup>188</sup>

Quetelet's quantifications sought to pinpoint those who most jeopardized the social order—those who threatened to unravel the average. Once identified, these figures who could weaken societies' futures could be transformed or, if necessary, excised from the social body and set aside where they could do no harm. Quetelet's foundational work was taken further in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century by Italian criminal positivist Cesare Lombroso, who expounded on biological determinations toward criminality.<sup>189</sup> Lombroso's concerns was more to do with evolution than statistics—he feared a biological atavism among segments of the population would lead to a degenerative dynamic in the entire polity. He cast aberrant outliers as vectors of social disease. Part and parcel to Quetelet's views, and those of followers like Lombroso, was the conviction that the social deleterious effects of the systemically abnormal could only be ameliorated through state action.

In 1844, twelve years after Quetelet's work on crime first appeared and eighty-three years before Governor Tilken's decree, the first Belgian “prison for boys” opened cells for young men who ran afoul of the state.<sup>190</sup> The category of child criminal emerged in Belgian jurisprudence. Initially, the sole tactic for transforming these individuals into socially productive agents was quarantine from adult offenders. Debates roiled for decades around the roles of other measures—

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> These are the specters that haunt “Treatise on Man:” each with its own chapter.

<sup>189</sup> Daniel Pick, “The Faces of Anarchy: Lombroso and the Politics of Criminal Science in Post-Unification Italy,” *History Workshop Journal* 21, no. 1 (March 1, 1986): 60–86.

<sup>190</sup> Christiaens, Jenneke. 1999. “A History of Belgium's Child Protection Act of 1912 The Redefinition of the Juvenile Offender and His Punishment.” *European Journal of Crime, Criminal Law and Criminal Justice* 7 (1): 5–21.

isolation, education, and the most efficacious durations of child incarceration. Perhaps the most contentious issue concerned the role of the church in working with child criminals. The “prison for boys” opened against the backdrop of nested political battles known as the “school wars” over parochial education. The outcome was that the Catholic Church secured a monopoly over national primary and secondary education in 1884.<sup>191</sup> Arguing for the pedagogical and “reeducational” value of imprisonment for delinquents, the church was able to extend its reach from classrooms into prison cells. Child incarceration became framed by the dual notions of moral and spiritual reformation and a national interest in protecting the social future.

Decades of metropolitan debates and around the incarceration of youth and children went unreferenced in Tilken’s decree. Nonetheless, Ordinance Number 76/J is a clear product of this genealogy. It would take a decade for the act’s vision to come to fruit in the form of carceral infrastructure for children. On February 11, 1944, state officials commissioned the National Penitentiary for Delinquent Youth at Niangara. As described, Niangara was a remote and inaccessible location, particularly from the urban zones where most child criminals were arrested and tried. Officials acknowledged that Niangara’s rural situation effectively increased sentence duration due to the difficult journey to reach the site. It was thus mandated that “minors... be sent to the colony provided the duration of detention justified their displacement.”<sup>192</sup> Many children came from Kinshasa. Their journeys upriver could take months—longer even than most maximum sentences.

What crimes justified such displacements? Magistrates decided. Little can be gleaned in the archives about the logic and debates around sentencing for Niangara’s inmates until 1950,

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<sup>191</sup> These were known as the First and Second School Wars.

<sup>192</sup> Booklet entitled, “Apercu du traitement de L'enfance Delinquante au Congo Belge et au Ruanda Urundi “ in the “Colonie Pénitentiaire” portofolio in GG 16.611 at the AA.

when another decree “inspired by” 1912 penal reforms in Belgium called for clarifications and revisions to the extant law. The 1950 decree clearly defined a child as an individual under the age of eighteen. To this point the *de facto* punishment for all convicts, whatever the age, was penal labor. The new decree exempted children from hard labor, replacing work with “education and protection measures.”<sup>193</sup> It created special jurisdictions for courts sentencing child offenders, and required officers from the Ministry of Public Affairs to assist judges in sentencing children to ensure concern for their welfare was balanced with the punitive requirements of justice.<sup>194</sup> Emerging developmentalist and pedagogical thinking framed child criminals as candidates for reform rather than discipline. These new techniques necessitated new infrastructures for managing child imprisonment and generated a bureaucracy for specialized assessment, data gathering, and curricula for the carceral reform of minors.

A particularly robust regime of data collection emerged. While Belgian judiciary officials bemoaned that it “was not possible to obtain statistics on juvenile delinquency,” the new law demanded that such information be collected regardless. Collecting such information was not simple. Even determining a criminal’s age, the sole criterion for juvenile status proved difficult. The Provincial Office of Administrative, Political and Judiciary Affairs informed the Governor-General of challenges in implementing the new legislation concerning child criminality: “It is necessary to indicate the difficulty of determining an individual’s age in the absence of organized civil associations! [Only] recourse to medical experts enables the formulation of a presumed age

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<sup>193</sup> Booklet entitled, “Aperçu du traitement de L'enfance Delinquante au Congo Belge et au Ruanda Urundi “ in the “Colonie Pénitentiaire” portfolio in GG 16.611.

<sup>194</sup> Correspondence from the Governor General, L. Petillon to the Provincial Governor of Orientale at Stanleyville on 25 of April 1956 in GG 6558.

for each subject.”<sup>195</sup> Doctors examined young bodies carefully to establish, in essence, culpability. The stakes of medical judgements were high. Clinical determinations of age determined if a person would be reformed or punished, redeemed by the workings of the state and church or subject to harsh penal labor. The convergence of medical and penal expertise in the post-1950 era is well captured in Nancy Rose Hunt’s arguments about the dual nervous natures of the Belgian colonial state—simultaneously deploying biomedical and security apparatus.<sup>196</sup> For children in late colonial Congo, the gateway to the juvenile prison was through the clinic. Their bodies were to give evidence for medical experts whose assessment sealed their prison itineraries.

State agents operating within this converged medical and carceral sphere tasked with determining a subject’s age—and thus their disciplinary trajectory—often found delinquents to be very young. Annually, Niangara interned a number of seven-year-olds, the youngest legally imprisonable age. In 1953, twenty-three children who were said to be seven, and dozens more of unknown ages, were among the hundreds who arrived at the colony. On average, the Penitentiary took in between 600 and 1000 children each year. Some were given the heaviest legally permissible sentences: indefinite incarceration with a five years minimum term. Only the wardens of Niangara possessed the power to determine the release conditions of the most serious prisoners of Niangara. The policies and guidelines such reviews demanded are not to be found in the archive. It is possible these decisions were arbitrary and based on relationship, or perhaps, mood.

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<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Nervous State: Violence, Remedies, and Reverie in Colonial Congo* (Duke University Press, 2016).

Imprisoned children were largely uneducated. In a typical year, only four of 824 child prisoners had completed primary school. No child housed at Niangara was ever a secondary school graduate. The overwhelming majority each year were boys. They constituted a population resonant with Quetelet's "young, male, poor, uneducated" aberrant outliers who threatened an average social ideal. Yet, not all were male. Each year between 3 and 7 percent of children sent to Niangara were girls. Hundreds of children each year, from across the Belgian Congo, found themselves arrested, medically examined, tried, convicted and relegated to Niangara to serve penance and be subject to reforming procedures.

Belgian Congo's state agents rationalized the existence of child criminals in Congo in several ways. The most compelling explanation, it seemed, was to see delinquents as the products of unnatural social geographies. For colonial authority figures juvenile crime was an inherently urban problem—symptomatic of the many moral dangers of city living. To address the roots of child crime, the government needed to "take measures to curb the promiscuity that is rife in major centers." The fruit of this immorality were "thousands of children resident [in urban communities] that have nothing to do."<sup>197</sup> Idleness engendered crime. To prevent child crime, officials reasoned that they needed to gather overproduced and underproductive children and "return them to their villages." The idea of return implied that children, even those born in the city who had never left urban centers, were fundamentally rustic creatures.<sup>198</sup> Their criminality emerged from being—through no fault of their own—out of place. Improper origins generated, as though by nature, inevitable aberrance and criminality.

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<sup>197</sup> Correspondence from provincial secretary P. Borie to the District Commissioner of Niangara. On June 2, 1954, in *Colonie Pénitentiaire* portfolio in GG 6588 at the AA.

<sup>198</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Nervous State*, "rustic" paired against the "urbane" from the introduction.



Even while symptomatic of urban problems, officials argued, the children's criminality was rooted in rural zones. "We find in tribal centers the disappearance of authority and the lack of paternal authority. All efforts must be made to restore the latter" to truly address delinquency. In this logic, the source of delinquent youth were absent fathers, and the ultimate, if unnamed, villains of the story the *femmes libres* who found in the city an escape from state, religious, patriarchal, familial, and customary authorities.<sup>199</sup> As in earlier eras, colonial figures draw a direct link between their power and "paternal authority." Belgian state agents acknowledged common cause with the male heads of Congolese communities and homes in agrarian zones. At the same time state agents found fathers wanting in fulfilling their responsibility to discipline female sexuality and marshal productive junior labor.

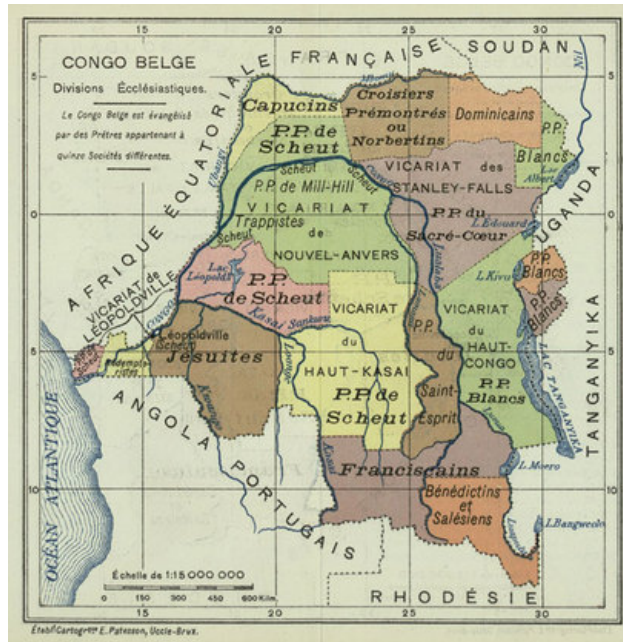
The colonial penal reforms of 1950 marked a philosophical shift towards the "education and protection" of child prisoners. These reforms in Congo's children's prison echoed those deployed in the metropole almost a century earlier. In Belgium, the incarceration of delinquent youth deployed secular and psychological tactics. Previous educational strategies of encouraging children to observe and respect authority figures—including a standard curriculum that required children to repeat phrases like "People everywhere shall submit to the will of Leopold III" as late as the mid 1940s—failed to curb juvenile delinquency and were abandoned. In this era of reform and reflection, questions were asked of those who were charged with the previous educational and penal responsibilities over Congo's children.

Where once biological fathers in the villages bore the blame for juvenile delinquency, now it was Catholic fathers who were expected to address questions concerning the strategies of

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<sup>199</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt, "Noise over Camouflaged Polygamy, Colonial Morality Taxation, and a Woman-Naming Crisis in Belgian Africa," *The Journal of African History* 32, no. 3 (1991): 471–494.

moral pedagogy the employed in the decades of their monopoly of children in both class and prison cell. In Niangara this critical gaze fell upon the work of the Dominican Order.



*Fig 1. 2 “Belgian Congo Ecclesiastical Map” [The Dominican domain is in the top right quadrant of the image. It extended from the Uele River to south to the border of Sudan to north; and from 27<sup>o</sup> to 30<sup>o</sup> west.]*

### Moral Reeducation

Dominican missionaries from Belgium arrived in Niangara in 1911 to establish the order’s first mission stations in Africa.<sup>200</sup> Most were Flemish. The Dominicans, officially the Order of Preachers, are a “teaching order” within the Catholic Church: authorized to oversee educational institutions—similar to the Jesuit and Holy Cross orders. In the Belgian Congo education was less by academic achievement than a moralizing impulse. “The moral formation of pupils,” Marc

<sup>200</sup> Denis, Philippe. 1998. *The Dominican Friars in Southern Africa: A Social History, 1577-1990*. BRILL. Page 100.

Depaepe argues, “was considered in the colonial context of the Congo as a much more important educational objective than the acquisition of knowledge.”<sup>201</sup> In the Congo, as in Belgium, this moral formation was the exclusive domain of the Catholic Church. Historian of African Christianity, Bengt Sundkler, wrote:

“The Catholic Church in Congo...had a theory, formed, as they felt, by hard experience: adults in Africa did not respond and could not be won for the faith. The only possible category to aim at was the children. To the Catholics at the time this was part of an international concern, from Mongolia to Congo, and their organization ‘Holy Childhood’ was founded with this in view. The Jesuits insisted... a Church in Congo had to begin with a generation of children. ‘The Church could wait’, until these children in their turn were to become adult members of the Holy Church. No prophecy proved more appropriate. The little boys [would] become soldiers in the army but soldiers with a difference: they were successful voluntary catechists winning thousands for the faith.”<sup>202</sup>

The work of early Catholic evangelists and catechists was not wholesale conversion of all in the communities they encountered. Rather, church leaders leveraged infrastructures and human resources to create a beachhead within Congolese lineages for a future generation of believers. They imagined a new generation of Congolese, raised under Catholic guidance, who could build the true church over the objections or indifference of their intractable kith and kin. The work of Dominicans in Niangara with delinquents was thus crucial. Losing a generation of Congolese children to moral decrepitude meant the entire apparatus of the church would again need to “wait” for the next era of youth to emerge who could be shaped into the future Congolese Catholic community. This was not just about ecclesiastical futures. The state was also in wait for a new generation of citizens. An imagined army of young catechists were to join their parochial educators both on mission and, literally, on the imperial payroll.

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<sup>201</sup> Marc Depaepe, “How Should the History of Education Be Written? Some Reflections about the Nature of the Discipline from the Perspective of the Reception of Our Work,” *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 23, no. 5–6 (September 1, 2004): p 789.

<sup>202</sup> B. Sundkler and C. Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa*, vol. 74 (Cambridge Univ Pr, 2000), p 89.

An ecclesiastical map devised by church and state authorities, established geographies of control to implemented this grand strategy for Congo’s Catholic future. Authorities assigned the region North of the Uele river in eastern Congo to the Dominicans. Among their first projects were to establish a primary school at Watsa, on the edge of their religious concession and established a small seminary for post primary education at Dungu.<sup>203</sup>

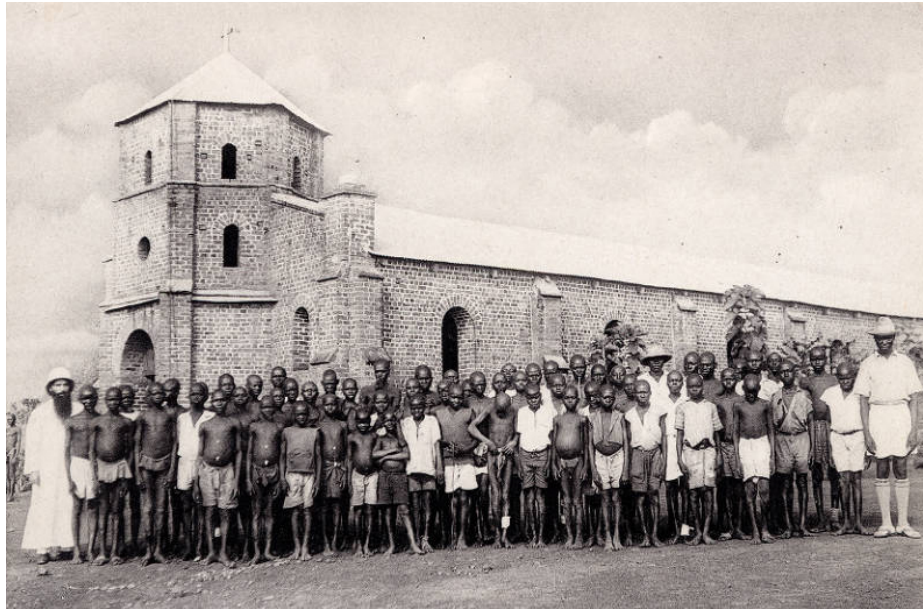


Figure 3. “Young Christians on Day of Baptism” taken at a Dominican Mission in Niangara district around 1920<sup>204</sup>

Uniquely, however, it fell to the Dominicans to care for wayward youth who slipped through the cracks of the grand moral/pedagogical strategy. Moral reeducation of delinquents became their urgent and particular responsibility. Discipline was manifest in quotidian reality for the young inmates of Niangara. Life at Niangara fell into particular patterns, as follows: from 5:30 to 8 children awoke, sang the national anthem in assembly, exercised and ate breakfast.

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<sup>203</sup> Agayo Bakonzi, University of Wisconsin-Madison. 1982. *The Gold Mines of Kilo-Moto in Northeastern Zaire: 1905-1960*, p 146, 159.

<sup>204</sup> “Young Christians on Day of Baptism, Faradje, Congo, ca.1920-1940 :: International Mission Photography Archive, University of Southern California .1860-ca.1960.

From 8 to noon was manual labor for older youth, and classes for younger children. From noon till 1:45 was lunch and “mandatory rest.” From 2 to 4:30pm was education for older youth and vocational training for younger children. 4:30 to 5:15pm marked the sole 45-minute stretch in the day where young people could play “sports and games” or, if they were in violation of some protocol, more compulsory labor (*corvée*). The remains of the day consisted of dinner prepared and cleaned up by the inmates, bedtime at 6 and lights out by 8pm. Dominicans enacted moral reeducation, nowhere defined or articulated in strategy, through management of the rhythms of the day, and applying corrective punishments. Monastic in routine, children endured moral reeducation as an ordering of their lives. The unruly conditions and broken homes from which they emerged—at least in the state’s imagination—were replaced with civic ritual, spiritual inculcation, productive labor, and study.

This, at least, was how the infrastructure of moral reeducation was designed to function. Within the intense strictures of such structure the capacity to misbehave seemed remote. In practice, when assessed by the state, something quite different was found to be taking place. When J. L. Wauters, the District Commissioner of Paulis,<sup>205</sup> forwarded his annual report for 1957 on the Penitentiary to the Governor of the Eastern Province little in the document appeared remarkable. One comment, however, concerning the need for prison officials to “steer young offenders away from dangerous promiscuity,” veered from standard bureaucratic reportage.<sup>206</sup> Attached to the report were two sealed letters, both starkly marked “*CONFIDENTIEL*.” In these letters the reference to promiscuity, and the language of infection breathlessly invoked in the

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<sup>205</sup> Now Isiro.

<sup>206</sup> Correspondence between J.L. Wauters and the Governor of Orientale Province, on March 8, 1957. in *Colonie Pénitentiaire* portfolio in GG 6558.

opening lines of this chapter, were clarified: “A conspiracy of silence covers the actions of our residents. The facts of my report... are not new but have never been reported. I will not be quelled by false prudishness... An examination of the register reveals that, since 1948, homosexuality has reigned in the Prison Colony for Juvenile Delinquents.” The report revealed that prison guards, older inmates, and the children themselves were engaging in consensual and non-consensual sexual activities. The vision of purifying discipline producing a future army of catechists was, at Niangara, producing something quite different in practice. Far from becoming a zone of model moral reeducation, Niangara was, for at least a decade, a site of documented sustained “attacks on morals.” The Dominican director, is portrayed in the report as either naive and ineffectual, too “prude” to take a hard look at his prison, or, it was very subtly implied, potentially complicit. In any case he harshly disciplined children discovered in sexual contact. In one case a boy, Matalatala, who was caught engaged in “obscene acts at night with another boy” was sentenced to two weeks solitary confinement in the darkness of Niangara’s *cachot* (dungeon).<sup>207</sup>

The chaotic yet systemic victimization of Niangara’s prisoners by their minders, and the pursuits of pleasure engaged in by the inmates themselves, effaced the staid, metronomic temporalities of order imagined by penal experts and church leaders in Kinshasa. The irruptive experiences of abuse, and perhaps consensual sexual expression, overflowed the delineations of the day imagined to be the osmotic medium for moral reeducation. The quotidian processes themselves, even as ideally conceived, were not designed not to extrude productive adults from lost children. Rather, moral reeducation was a civic project: it could bring wayward youth closer to a Queteletian norm of the colonized child. It was only then, in turn, that children could be

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<sup>207</sup> “Transferts Jeunes Delinquants de Colonie Penitairre Niangara” order issued on June 2, 1954, Portfolio: “Colonie Pénitentiaire” in GG 16.611.

pedagogically shaped for future productive social use: builders of the ideal future church and state. Wayward youth, products of urban moral decay, were sent to the remote rim of the rain forest—a place imagined to be somehow their true home— to be transformed. But this did not happen. Instead they were made into subjects of arbitrary detention, predation, and ultimately left to be architects of their own futures. The church-state complex offered no paths to adulthood, only alternative childhoods.

Whatever the particular failures of the leaders of Niangara to protect the safety and privacy of children under their charge, and enact even a problematic vision of moral elevation, the ideal educational itinerary for Congolese students not under incarceration was bleak. Nancy Rose Hunt writes that “a relentless, belittling paternalism hindered post-primary schooling and fed profound disquiet” in colonial Congo.<sup>208</sup> The simmering discontent, humiliation, and foreclosed futures of moral education (and reeducation) clearly delineated the structural limitations built into colonial attempts to shape and reshape Congolese youth.

The untenable visions and realities of this project eventually collapsed. In 1957 the Niangara Colony was dissolved due to Wauter’s damning report, and a new center established in Kanga-Kanga, conceived in great haste. No longer a parochial institution, this was to a modern state-run project, focused on science and psychology. Healing was to be applied to the fragile psyches of delinquents. Inmates were not foundationally perpetrators but rather victims of trauma. The project was no longer to redirect the wayward souls of lost children. There was not, however, sufficient time for the project to develop and independence ended such new dreams of secularized, psychologized Congolese futures.

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<sup>208</sup> Hunt, *Nervous State*, p 168.

## **Katwa and Hurlburt**

Elsewhere in eastern Congo the soul remained at the center of the frame when it came to imagining and addressing juvenile delinquency. Lost souls were the animating object of Paul Hurlburt Sr.'s life. Paul, the first son of Charles Hurlburt, a founder of the Africa Inland Mission (AIM). AIM was among the earliest American Protestant missionary groups to send individuals to eastern Africa. In 1896 Charles moved his family, including his six-year-old son Paul, to Kijabe, Kenya to bolster the floundering mission there in the wake of the death its first leader, Peter Cameron Scott. There he set roots and established a boarding school for missionary children, Rift Valley Academy. Charles Hurlburt's authoritarian style stabilized the entire mission, and his forceful manner convinced Theodore Roosevelt to negotiate Protestant missionary access to eastern Congo with Prince Albert of Belgium.<sup>209</sup> When permission was granted an exploratory trip to Congo took place in 1910. By 1917 Charles had relocated to Congo and Paul, recently graduated from Biola University in Southern California joined him there. Plans were laid for a permanent mission to a "savage area"<sup>210</sup> north of Bukavu, their landing point, where the gospel could thrive. Paul Hurlburt was ready to spend the remainder of his life in Congo, compelled by a missional heritage obtained from his family and the conservative evangelical theology gleaned from his education in southern California.

Education became a cornerstone of the Protestant missionaries' earliest efforts in eastern Congo. They shared with the Catholic fathers an understanding of its power and potential to redirect future generations of Congolese. Paul Hurlburt's experiences at Biola<sup>211</sup> University were

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<sup>209</sup> Hurlburt's 1925 address to the International Mission Conference claims that Roosevelt's insistence on seeing the "fruit" of the work cemented their relationship and provided the capital he needed to ask for access to Congo.

<sup>210</sup> Nelson, *Missionizing*, p. 56.

<sup>211</sup> A word conglomerated from the initial name: Bible Institute of Los Angeles.



formative. Established in 1908 in La Mirada, California. Biola was imagined as an alternative to other Christian universities—a place where global missions were to be the overwhelming focus. Hurlburt would be among their first graduates. This missiological single-mindedness owed much to the denominations heritage. The Baptist movement in the United States was an offshoot of a 17<sup>th</sup> century schismatic offshoot from the church of England around essentially one theological issue: that only those whose personally and knowingly accept their sinful state and subsequent need for salvation could be baptized and, thus saved from eternal damnation.<sup>212</sup> Baptist theology's cornerstone doctrine was “believers baptism.” This theology profoundly affected how missionaries imagined the place and role of children in the church.

Where Catholics in Congo were concerned over lost children in a battle for the soul of the future church, these Protestants focused on individual itineraries. It could be imagined that Baptists viewed each person as possessing a metaphorical sand timer ebbing away the seconds toward the end of his or her life. All souls who did not accept Christ and experience baptism before time ran out was destined for eternal torment. In Baptist theology, the sand timer began at birth. Every living human was, from birth, destined for hell based on the doctrine of original sin, supported by passages from the Bible such as Psalm 51:5 that stated ““Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.” Unlike Catholics, however, dedicated Baptists could not simply immerse the child as an infant to bring them into the Kingdom of God. Each individual adherent had to be “old enough to understand” the Gospel and accept it personally. Knowledge of culpability and accountability were central. Childhood, therefore, was a position of temporal double-bind: a precarious time period when a child was born in sin,

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<sup>212</sup> This schism is typified by John Toombe's essay *Antipaedobaptism* published in 1652 which attacks the arguments for infant baptism circulating in the Church of English. An exemplar of a more moderate view is John Owen, a 17<sup>th</sup> century Puritan theologian whose 1657 tract “On Infant Baptism” presented a more moderate departure.

destined for hell, but could not be saved until intellectual capacity permitted volitional acceptance of the doctrines of salvation. Biblical translation, education, proselytizing, and youth work were all, thus, bound together in taking advantage of a child's impressionability to shaped by the Gospel, but educated enough to understand the commitments there were making so they might "own" the ideas they heard preached.

If children were crucial agents in a theological and temporal nexus for Protestant missionaries, they also served as power affective agents—stirring the longing and stoking the passion to serve for many missionaries. In 1925 A. Amory, a single female missionary serving in the Congo Balolo Mission, recounted a jarring encounter.<sup>213</sup> "What a pitiful sight! Only today I saw a child so wasted away, one mass of sores and lying in a hut beside the ashes of a fire, it would difficult to say when the child was last washed, or the hut last swept." Amory went to comfort the child and "the natives who saw me touch the child exclaimed..." causing her to "rue the callousness it revealed" in their hearts. She recounts that she "could not help recalling how Jesus never shrank, in his tender love and pity, from touching the most vile. But here, in this country, such a thing is unknown, and the weak are left alone to die. Indeed, what a pitiful sight! And this is by no means a solitary case. May the hearts of these people soon be touched by the infinite love of Jesus."

For Amory and her missionary fellows, it was the plight of children that animated the clarity of the mission most strongly. Vulnerable children were perceived as the most egregious exemplars of the lost condition of the Congolese people. For many missionaries the animating impulse was rescue. For others, like Hurlburt, they also could become agents of spiritual rescue

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<sup>213</sup> Wack, Henry Wellington. 1905. *The Story of the Congo Free State: Social, Political, and Economic Aspects of the Belgian System of Government in Central Africa*. London.

for all Congolese if trained properly. Mirroring Catholic strategies at the time, in 1905, Protestant missionaries who baptized their first converts saw the three boys from among “the young in school” as “the best soil of all” for planting “the Good Seed” of the Gospel. The newly baptized were deemed the “nucleus of the Church of God in this place.” To some Protestant missionaries, state authorities, and Catholic fathers alike, Congolese parents had abandoned their children to literal and spiritual disease. Powerful adults in colonial Congo invested much hope in children, however, to transform the colony’s social, spiritual, economic, and political futures. Biological metaphors again took center stage, but unlike Quetelet’s criminal youth who played atavistic agents to the social body, baptized youth were productive nuclei—changing from within the cells of renewed polity. They represented healing power, the pluripotent cells of a vast and powerful Protestant religious movement founded on the Gospel.

How did the subjects of such fervent hope experience this investment in their futures? Despite the possibility of material gain from joining colonial labor regimes afforded by mission education, and avenues of spiritual and social edification possible on missionary stations, the infantilizing instincts of missionaries like Hulburt were difficult for many stomach. One future convert described his first encounter with the mission in mixed terms: “I went home that evening with a handful of salt, but my spirit was left back there because of the khaki shorts.” This stands in contrast to the contemporaneous experience of newly enlisted workers at Butembo’s *Mines des Grand Lacs* (MGL) who were given one “blanket, two cooking pots, one jacket, one small kerosene lamp, and one heavy sweater.” The objects were “displayed with pride by the new [mine] workers” and the items were “strongly envied” by those in their community. By contrast, the sartorial expectations of the *Baharobe* were repulsive.<sup>214</sup> Infantilizing converts through

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<sup>214</sup> Mukohya Vwakyanakazi, “African Traders In Butembo, Eastern Zaire (1960-1980): A Case Study of Informal Entrepreneurship in a Cultural Context of Central Africa” (The University of Wisconsin - Madison, 1982) p 129.

dress, regardless of biological age, appeared to be a non-sectarian impulse. Non-white adults depicted in the Dominican baptismal gathering cited earlier in this chapter were costumed in ways similar to the *Baharobe*. Long socks, short pants, and short-sleeved shirts functioned as a uniform for those apprenticed to white missionaries. The missionaries, of course, donned the garb of full-grown adults—including long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Conjecture suggests the desire to develop a “blank slate” of youth to change Congo’s future compelled such decisions, though no doubt deep seated paternalism, and colonial nervousness about social place, were at work as well.

For Hurlburt’s cadre of young evangelists this diminishment stung. Though converted, baptized, and brought into leadership, these young men—always men, always boys—were frozen in place in social “development.” For mission youth, baptism marked full inclusion in the eternal kingdom of God, but only partial integration into the earthly order of social adulthood. Hurlburt and other missionaries controlled reproduction with the Baptists community; they had sole discretion in the marriage matches of their protégés. Hurlburt and others decided which among their Protestant evangelists were mature enough to marry and determined which young Protestant women they were to spend their lives with.<sup>215</sup> Unconsciously within a lineage of many decades of such control of junior reproduction, Protestants imagined themselves managing the biological future of the church in Congo by ensuring Godly marriages were under their purview. Young evangelists in the church found this to be another infantilizing process, and one that removed them from deeply meaningful marriage rites and practices their biological families insisted upon.

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<sup>215</sup> Interview with Mbusa Manassee, Beni, North Kivu, June 13, 2014. Manassee, who later became a prominent leader in the CBCA denomination, and his wife Kavira were selected for marriage in such a manner by an American missionary.

Of greater concern, and of greater impact, was Hurlburt's dogged refusal to provide Congolese church workers with a salary. Hurlburt felt paying Congolese workers would foster avarice, and that their true "reward was in heaven."<sup>216</sup> This decision spurred intense debate within the UAM missionary community and between Congolese and American Protestant evangelists during the period—from the arrival of missionaries in 1929 through independence in 1960. In the late 1930s an influential early convert, Daudi Makenzi, protested the lack of pay given that both Anglicans and Catholics paid Congolese evangelists a small stipend. Hurlburt refused to discuss a change and later expelled Makenzi from the mission when he began organizing his colleagues against the policy. Makenzi and his followers appealed to the state for redress—arguing they were being forced to labor without pay, a condition of slavery. The Territorial Administrator sided with Hurlburt under the pretext that Makenzi was never promised pay in writing. Further agitation and organization by Makenzi and his peers led to his arrest and conviction for "starting a religious movement without permission." The punishment for the leaders was fifteen years of relegation to a zone south of Bukavu, many hundreds of kilometers distant. Makenzi's views, however, persisted. A number of young Congolese evangelists continued to question Hurlburt's decision making, albeit in more subdued fashions. Lacking a way to earn an income dramatically reduced the possibilities for evangelists to, among other things, establish a homestead and paying bridewealth. Church workers lived next to mission stations and thus did not have time or land to cultivate. Dependence on missionary largesse was total. In effect, this amounted to another path by which Hurlburt and his followers managed, and ultimately blocked, some forms of social maturity of their Congolese evangelists and church workers. This was why church workers submitted to Hurlburt's control over their determining

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<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

who their spouse would be. There was not another avenue to pursue.

Tensions over reproduction and social adulthood were further exacerbated by collusion between missionaries and the state against initiatory practices. Both church and state perceived initiation as ripe ground for inspiring insurgency. Durable practices in the region of Hurlburt's mission work called for young men of an age set to be gathered by a ritual expert "blindfolded, circumcised, and then as a group would spend up to a month in the forest, sleeping together and taking cold morning baths till their wounds healed." This process was condemned by church and state. The ban was deeply unpopular. Protestant evangelists, not unlike young Meru women in Lynn Thomas' work, feared that without circumcision, "they would be denied adulthood."<sup>217</sup> Desire for social position afforded only by initiation—given the lack of other routes toward social position— led many to pursue circumcision despite the ban. In the 1940s "some who sought out Hurlburt's advice on the matter were sent up to the AIM mission hospital at Oicha to have the operation done."<sup>218</sup> Like the age evaluation in juvenile courts, and the pathological framings of immorality in Niangara, initiation was similarly medicalized. Elder Congolese church leaders wrestled with the issue and determined that both traditional and medical circumcision, which came to be known as "European circumcision" were unbiblical. They confronted Hurlburt for allowing youth to be circumcised in the hospital, and with his consent excommunicated all the youth, even those with Hurlburt's permission, who received the procedure in the hospital.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> Thomas, Lynn M. 2003. *Politics of the Womb: Women, Reproduction, and the State in Kenya*. University of California Press. p 102.

<sup>218</sup> Nelson, *Missionizing*, 68.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid*.

Dress, pay, and circumcision were debates that refused to resolve. All centered on youth attempting to pass through a threshold to social adulthood. These youths were attempting to engage in respectable petition and sought to invoke and obey authority in these matters. Yet they did not receive reciprocal respect. As the colonial period came to an end, Congolese evangelists came to view aspects of Hurlburt and his American colleagues control as untenable. In June 1960, many Congolese young people, long frustrated by Hurlburt's intransigence decided that "the day of mercy was over." They sought, through violence, to take their futures into their own hands. Four years later these debates were spectacularly eclipsed as a massive multifaceted insurgency would begin.

## **Conclusions**

In colonial Congo, state agents arrested children, placed them before doctors for clinical assessments of biological maturity, and relegated some to remote parts of Congo for moral renewal. Meanwhile young Congolese evangelists on Protestant missions sought recognition for their diligent striving towards respectability and responsibility. Recognition was not forthcoming. These young Protestant men insisted that they refused to remain children. Theirs was a rejection of the achingly slow process of spiritual and social maturity under rubrics of transformation managed by missionary elites.

These two modes of religious authority leveraged disciplinary power against those who acted out against these regimes. Tactics of excommunication, arrest, solitary confinement, extended incarceration and detention were deployed against unruly young people. Often state and mission colluded to exclude common foes. Amid the strictures and blockages presented by such figures, talk of wild power was ever in the air. In eastern Congo, stories like Mwindo

circulated in song and dance alongside internment orders and evangelical tracts. Old epics made space for new music, fashion, and economic possibilities that generated a landscape of opportunity for young people in late colonial Congo. The avenues of achieving respectability—passing through carceral redemption or diligent Christian labor—excluded many from the possibilities of social mobility. Forces of the wild remained a powerful alternative to such restricted, elusive futures for the young. New political ideas provided alternative avenues to the pursuit of domestic authority. Insurgent young people refused what was offered in lineage and missionary church futures, and thus posed significant threats to the enduring power of various forms of male eldership.

The carceral techniques of Belgian Congo's juvenile prison sought to conform wayward youth to an "average" standard, using strategies of moral reeducation and punitive discipline to produce conformity. By moving them into remote situations and casting children into projects for reform, colonial figures fetishized the potential of carceral transformation. Toxic conditions of vulnerable children in isolation, cast-off by the state and alienated from families, bred predation and abuse. Children looked to one another to engage in fleeting forms of pleasure amid dark, difficult circumstances. Their moments of connection flicker in the margins of the security archive, locatable in the panicked correspondence between officials in the Ministry of Justice about a loss of control at the penitentiary.

Paul Hurlburt sought to bring lost children into salvation through the baptism. But he offered spiritual transformation at the cost of social mobility. Youth were frozen in sartorial, economic, and physical space. Young evangelists became responsible for thousands of souls even as they were denied sovereignty over their own homes and churches, over their own marriages and fortunes. The racialized regimes of Protestant power bred deep resentment and



anger that found multiple outlets for expression. Stones, pleading letters to international political elites, and debates over theology were deployed by young men seeking respect and accountability.

In focusing on these two examples—moral reeducation and spiritual renewal via mission leadership—this chapter shows traces how a complex of state and church did not allow non-conforming children pathways to adulthood, but rather simply alternative ways of being children, still permanently under the authority of a pater—the state, the pastor, the warden. This inability to inherit authority led to a deep disillusionment among youth who found only frustrated paths into adulthood. As the colony became self-governing, passing through its own transition to anarchic national adolescence, many youth in eastern Congo identified ways to transform society through new thresholds of their devising. The social fathers who blocked their paths into adulthood would be among those who they brought to account, made to endure their own threshold and transition. These passages—often out of the world of the living— would prove to be painful too.

#### **Chapter Four: “Congo Crisis” in Bunande, 1960-1964**

Political scientist René Lemarchand writes that “one of the more baffling aspects of the 1964-1965 eastern rebellion... is the complex intermingling of local issues with the regional insurgency.”<sup>220</sup> Lemarchand draws attention to two important quandaries. First, how to link drivers of the rebellion tied to deep, localized dynamics and, at the same time, attend to endemic issues affecting most citizens of decolonizing Congo during a volatile period? Second, and more broadly, Lemarchand points us to a critical analytical question: what scale engenders the clearest insights on the movement? This chapter aims to address both challenges. At the same time, it wrestles with a scalar dyad that threatens to mislead—what defines the bounds of the local and the regional?

The focus is on a crosscutting dynamic: how elite economic and political class formation in the “Congo Crisis” period precipitated the rebellion. I argue that economic and political developments linked the particular climate of unrest in North Kivu province with similar events unfolding throughout decolonizing Congo. At the same time intimate resentments evoked by the exclusions of new forms of class were critical in catalyzing the rebellion within communities in eastern Congo. Rising male elders, especially in urban zones, leaned into the emerging opportunities afforded by fellow elites and state officials and away from power drawn from social followers. As elsewhere in decolonizing Africa, these men, once critical patrons, showed

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<sup>220</sup> René Lemarchand, “Reflections on the Recent Historiography of Eastern Congo,” *Journal of African History* 54, no. 3 (November 2013): 417–37.

“contempt for old norms of reciprocity with clients [and] shattered the latter's acceptance of gross social inequality” that new possibilities of wealth accumulation made possible.<sup>221</sup> Kin, and fictive kin, suffered from the loss of these relations and, ultimately, fought back to remind elders of their obligations. This chapter draws on themes introduced in the previous two chapters—vernacular debates around power and maturity and state and religious attempts to discipline unruly youth—to interpret these dynamics.

To ground the analysis, processes of class transformation are explored in a single zone: northern North Kivu province's primary urban trading center, the city of Butembo. In this town and its rural periphery, I trace trajectories of economic change and political engagement from the colonial era through 1964. From Butembo, during a critical period of instability between independence and the Simba Rebellion, a cadre of powerful Congolese business families arose that would dominate the regional economy from the Simba era to the present day. These same figures attempted, less successfully, to form a class of political operatives who sought advantage by deploying Cold War registers of inequality, and exclusionary forms of ethnic politics, to direct youthful resentments against political enemies.

This chapter explores why social pressures from crystalizing class divisions in Butembo during the Congo Crisis were not alleviated by so-called “ethnic solidarity.”<sup>222</sup> Even as novel techniques of Nande ethnic identification gained momentum in the early 1960s—inspired by Bakonzo “blood brothers” in Uganda declaring an independent ethnic kingdom of Rwenzururu

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<sup>221</sup> John Lonsdale, “Globalization, Ethnicity, and Democracy: A View from the Hopeless Continent,” *Globalisation in World History*, 2002, p 79.

<sup>222</sup> Sara Berry describes the tension between ethnic affiliations and economic disparities in *Fathers Work for Their Sons: Accumulation, Mobility, and Class Formation in an Extended Yorùbá Community* (University of California Press, 1985).

on August, 15, 1962—internal tensions beset ethnic patriots in eastern Congo.<sup>223</sup> This chapter traces how the moral expectations of ethnic affiliation intensified, rather than reduced, the stresses generated by economic exclusions. Shared expectations of reciprocity, ignored by some elites and demanded by juniors, was exacerbated by widening economic inequality. We trace how elites who leveraged the limited economic opportunities afforded by colonial wage labor aggressively pursued the possibilities of decolonizing markets—especially in cash cropping. This narrow opportunity for significant wealth accumulation incentivized the freezing of youth into social place, in part to reduce the cost of their labor. As Africans once worked for Belgians in North Kivu’s racialized economy, rising business leaders imagined lineage youth were to work for Kinande-speaking elites and provide a platform for their wealth acquisition. Offered in return were limited forms of respectability, palatable to elites. This proved, to many young people, a hollow trade. Instead of participating in these elite-directed projects, the Simba rose up against a cadre of Shemwindo-like figures who were to face, in 1964, armies of avenging sons.

### **Butembo**

The urban milieu of Butembo gives shape the *middle scale* of analysis adopted in this chapter. Butembo’s history provides context for the particular processes of class formation examined in this chapter. A cross-cutting view of conditions and trends in northern North Kivu from the late 1950s to 1964 emerges. This chapter explores antecedents to the Congo Crisis and Simba Rebellion that go beyond previous analyses, stuck in scales too wide or too narrow. A regional frame, grounded by a single urban space, allows us to better explore the experiences and

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<sup>223</sup> Derek R. Peterson, *Creative Writing: Translation, Bookkeeping, and the Work of Imagination in Colonial Kenya* (Heinemann, 2004); Derek R. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A History of Dissent, C.1935-1972* (Cambridge University Press, 2012). The term “blood brothers” comes from a Nande propaganda website, [banande.com](http://banande.com), that articulates an ethnic history of consanguinity between Konzo and Nande.

memories that characterized this era of rebel rule and helps trace the emerging post-colonial order that Simba rebels were so intent on countering.

It also reveals how and why social elders strove to both produce, protect, and preserve it. This chapter's approach opens the study up to a broad range of practices, aspirations, and debates by situating its focus on Simba violence against an emerging class category and nascent ethnic polity. Rebels actively mocked, attacked, and attempted to undo predictable paths to class respectability that took slow shape during a thirty-year period leading up and through independence. Against these notions of adulthood, Simba leveraged illiberal, kin-based idioms of obligation. Simba sought to overturn the comforts and forms of authority upwardly mobile men worked busily to establish. Elites and aspiring elites, in turn, charged the Simba with being agents of incoherent, even demonic evil. Cast as lost children, under dark influences of political leftism and the occult, those in power worked to protect the moral order Simba sought to invert.

These dynamics emerged out of stewing tensions in late colonial Congo and came to a boil during the tumultuous years of chaos and opportunity between independence and the spectacular violence of mid-1964. Moving beyond prison colonies, rural communities, and mission stations, this chapter explores a city to understand, as Crawford Young argues, why such zones were targeted with particular vigor by Simba Rebels in 1964.<sup>224</sup> Why were urban spaces a primary locus for violence enacted by this insurgency? And, why this city, Butembo?

The story begins in October 1964 as war and panic first reached the city.

Butembo lies in the mountainous heart of Bunande—the homeland of Congo's Kinande-speaking communities—high on the escarpment of the Albertine Rift. Butembo's weather is cold, despite it virtually straddling the equator, due to its 4,531-foot elevation. Simba insurgents

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<sup>224</sup> Crawford Young, "Rebellion and the Congo," *Protest and Power in Black Africa*, 1970, 968–1011.

penetrated the lush green hills surrounding the city at the peak of the movement's power. In late October 1964, approximately 3000 Simba rebels took the town. Butembo was strategic: a vital trading hub then and today, home to about 14,000 inhabitants at the time.<sup>225</sup> It was the last major city to fall under rebel control—the eastern geographical ambit of the movement. Simba took Butembo without bloodshed. Rumors of rebels perpetrating anti-elite violence provoked “general panic” in advance of the invasion. All whites and most Congolese elites living in the city engaged in a hasty exodus ahead of invasion rumors. Key among the fleeing figures were the town's emerging Kinande-speaking trading elite.<sup>226</sup> They were wise to flee. Upon capturing the town, Simba identified and rounded up remaining persons of power and influence and placed them on trucks bound for Beni, fifty-four kilometers to the south to be “judged by the people.”<sup>227</sup> Conviction by a voice vote in public trials of “crimes against the population” resulted in summary executions.<sup>228</sup>

The Simba regime took hold without serious opposition from the Butembo populace. Most townspeople, who called themselves *Bubolais*, were ambivalent about the presence of the rebels.<sup>229</sup> While Simba terrified the emerging Nande elite, the poor feared violence but imagined Simba rule might mark potential for change and opportunity. No matter the opinions, few

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<sup>225</sup> Mike Hoare, *Congo Mercenary* (Paladin Press, 2008) p 83.

<sup>226</sup> From “Témoignage de missionnaires assompionnistes parus dans Qu'il Regne , mars avril 1965.” p. 242 – 243 in Centre de Recherche et d'Information Socio-Politique, *CONGO 1964: Political Documents of a Developing Nation* (Princeton University Press, 1966).

<sup>227</sup> Verhaegen, “Congo 1964,” Princeton University Press, 1966.

<sup>228</sup> «Trois témoignages inédits sur l'action des groups armes de Marandura a Uvira,” in “Congo 1964,” pg. 58. Princeton University Press, 1966. There were identical, but inverted, mass trials of Simba after the rebellion where public acclamation determined death or freedom. See, for instance, “Boos mean death for Congo Rebels” a New York Times wire service piece published on December 7, 1964 on the front pages of papers like the *Detroit Free Press*.

<sup>229</sup> Interview with Kistali Muyayalo, Butembo, North Kivu, May 14, 2014. Butembo, North Kivu, D.R. Congo.

possessed the power to challenge the rebels. Government armed forces, the National Army of Congo (ANC), fled prior to the Simbas' arrival. Despite weeks of preparing for an assault and rooting out civilians allegedly sympathetic to the rebellion, whispers of an impending attack spurred the preemptive retreat.<sup>230</sup> This capitulation came on the heels of other mass ANC defections to the Simba forces across rebel-held zones.<sup>231</sup>

For less than two weeks, the Simba ruled Butembo. Then in early November, fierce fighting broke out when reconstituted ANC forces, led by mostly white "Rhodesian, South African and Belgian" mercenaries, besieged the city. This new force was tasked by the United States and Belgium to "hold the line against the rebel insurrection" which threatened to conquer all Congo.<sup>232</sup> After brief but intense fighting, the ANC-aligned forces retook the city in early November, 1964, killing over 500 Simba and suffering a single casualty.<sup>233</sup> The surviving Simba fled. International journalists wrote that people "liberated" from Simba-held zones in Congo, like Butembo, struggled to shake off "the eerie unreality of life under rebel rule," as if haltingly waking from a dream.<sup>234</sup> For people like Gustave Pengeza, a nineteen-year-old schoolteacher at the time, memories of rebel rule were vivid fifty years later.

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<sup>230</sup> Irish-born mercenary Mike Hoare who led the ANC's retaking of Butembo wrote "The coming of the Simbas struck terror into the hearts of the Congolese villagers and whole garrisons of the A.N.C. capitulated without firing a shot. In a number of cases, all that was necessary was a telephone call, warning that the Simbas were on their way!" Whatever the hyperbole of his account, it indicates the fear the ANC had of the rebels. From p 82 of *Congo Mercenary*.

<sup>231</sup> "Significance of the Congo Rebellion," J Anthony Lukas *Africa Report*, July 1964, New York Times Company, p. 24.

<sup>232</sup> Confidential letter From Tom Dodd to LBJ, November 24, 1965. Available in the United States National Archives: C.F. CO 52 Congo, Republic of (Former Belgian Congo) (1965).

<sup>233</sup> This operation was called Dragon Rouge. Much can be read about this in Mike Hoare's *Congo Mercenary*. There is also a military history by T Odom.

<sup>234</sup> Lloyd Garrison. "Congo Rebel Atrocities Related" *The New York Times*, November 12, 1964.

The Simba struck Pengeza as very young, “*jeunesse*,”<sup>235</sup> drawn from a large disaffected generation in newly independent Congo. He recalled acutely their ferocity in the face of the professional mercenary soldiers. “Their clothes were full of bullet holes, yet they advanced. Even the ones whose intestines were outside of their body held them with one hand and continued fighting with the other hand.”<sup>236</sup> Pengeza, a man seeking respectable employment in Butembo’s public schools, identified the source of Simba power as “unbelievable sorcery.”

The *dawa* that animated the Simba’s insurgency struck all who witnessed it in Butembo. Rebels mobilized various forms of *mai* medicine at every level of operations. Medicine was deployed as a battle tactic through the end of the movement. One battlefield commander, Lt. Colonel Abeti Kabwe, requested that the Simba’s commanding general, Nicolas Olenga, “send us the necessary ingredients so that all bridges in this area may be washed with remedies to protect them from bombing” to aid retreat.<sup>237</sup> Another rebel leader, Martin Kasongo, told an American journalist: “One pill and no one can touch us. [Bullets] dissolve into water. You Americans can bring all your bullets and bombs. They’ll be no use.”<sup>238</sup>

In the end, bullets, bombs, and the technologies and tactics of the multinational mercenary force were highly useful in ending the reign of the Simba. The loss of Butembo proved a significant strategic and symbolic failure: a turning point.<sup>239</sup> By the end of December,

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<sup>235</sup> “Youth” in French. This comes from the fact that much of the initial recruitment (per CRISP 1965) came from the ranks of the *Jeunes Mouvement de Libération du Congo -Lumumbaist*.

<sup>236</sup> Interview with Pengeza Mumbere Gustav, Mangina, DRC Congo. 27 March 2014.

<sup>237</sup> Lloyd Garrison “Congo Rebel Atrocities Related” *The New York Times*, November 12, 1964.

<sup>238</sup> “Significance of the Congo Rebellion,” J Anthony Lukas *Africa Report*, July 1964, New York Times Company, p. 24.

<sup>239</sup> Most significant, perhaps, was the paratrooper air drop on Stanleyville [Kisangani] around the same time, November 24, 1964. Most successful prior to 1996, of course.



1964, the Simba regime lost control of virtually all its former territory. The movement was decimated. A *coup d'état* in 1965 began Joseph Mobutu's 32-year tenure in power. Under his regime, the vestiges of the Simba were brutally suppressed by his army, a rejuvenated ANC. By the end of a series of purges, the Simba were no longer a threat to the state in Leopoldville. Straggling remnants of Simba forces persisted within Congo until 1975, operating largely as forest-bound bandits.<sup>240</sup>

### **Cold Warriors?**

The Simba rebellion was both massively successful and short-lived—its impact vast but brief. This chapter focuses on how and why the movement targeted an emerging vernacular elite class. It interprets Simba violence, mirroring concurrent generational conflicts in other parts of east Africa, as an opportunity for young men to “express their masculinity, lay claim to maturity, and capture the mobility that had eluded them.”<sup>241</sup> This approach runs against much scholarship on the rebellion.<sup>242</sup> Most studies frame the movement as a globally-linked leftist insurgency in an emerging postcolonial African state. The reasons for this owe much to the unique conditions in which the scholarship was produced, namely the so-called Congo Crisis.<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> That said, a deep, enduring afterlife of the movement took place when once Simba commander Laurent Kabila, after a long exile of 30 years in east Africa, helped catalyze a new rebellion in 1996 that brought down Mobutu's government and placed him in power.

<sup>241</sup> Paul Ocozbek, *An Uncertain Age: The Politics of Manhood in Kenya*, New African Histories, (Ohio University Press, 2017), p 29.

<sup>242</sup> Early studies, such Reneé Fox, et. Al (1965), did not mention, even by contrast, rebellions like Mau Mau in Kenya.

<sup>243</sup> The phrase, “Congo Crisis,” can be traced back to the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in polemics concerning Leopold's rule of the colony. See, for instance, H. R. Fox's “The Congo Crisis” published in the *Fortnightly Review* in 1901. A recurring, but better-known usage of the term began as early as 1960 when dozens of journalists were calling the transfer of state power from Belgians

The Congo Crisis began when Patrice Lumumba, the Prime Minister of Congo, was kidnapped from his home in Kinshasa, transported to Katanga province—the site of a well-supported foreign-backed secessionist movement—to be tortured and assassinated. He had been in office for 207 days. Both Belgium and the United States later acknowledged involvement in his death. In all, five significant insurgent movements emerged during this period. Moïse Tshombe's Belgium-backed Katangan secession, the Mulele Uprising in Kwilu in January 1964, the South Kasai secession, the Gizenga-led secession in 1961 eastern Congo, and the Simba Rebellion in eastern Congo of 1964. International involvement helped catalyze each of these rebellions.

Academics, concerned with such interference, commenced studies of the Simba conflict even before the movement was vanquished. Their work was written in the context of Mobutu's rise to power. The CIA's support for Mobutu was already clear.<sup>244</sup> This scholarship was thus composed in a climate where neocolonial projects seemed imminent.<sup>245</sup> The Africanist political scientists who first examined the Simba rebellion argued that the movement was a “second independence:” seeking to finish what political decolonization began.<sup>246</sup> Interpreting the vast and

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to Congolese the “Congo Crisis.” The phrase became a useful shorthand for the series of catastrophes that were resolved, ultimately, in Mobutu's seizure of power in 1965.

<sup>244</sup> Connor Cruise O'Brien, “The Congo, The United Nations, and Chapham House,” *The New Left Review*, June 1965.

<sup>245</sup> There is still much scholarship on eastern Congo that falls into the “rebel movements as proxy armies” for Cold War interests. See Rene Lamarchand's Eastern Congo Historiography piece in *Journal of African History* (2013) on p. 425. He also used the phrase the “‘so-called’ Simba rebellion.” It is unclear why this distancing term is used, given that was the identifier used by the rebels themselves to describe their movement in all internal communication.

<sup>246</sup> Freedom from external domination became the emancipatory framework within which this nascent scholarship, most within the discipline political science, sought to shape its interventions and perspectives. (See Chapter 7, “The Recurrent Crises of the Gatekeeper State” in Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge University Press, 2002) As Cold War alignments appeared to present a redoubled threat to the autonomy of Africa's independent nations, albeit in insidious forms, some of postcolonial Africa's first leaders, many once seen as heroes of anti-colonial movements, appeared to be less revolutionaries and more “gatekeepers” for Western economic and political interest. The case of Congo's Moïse Tshombe was held up as a prominent example of this type.

seemingly incoherent eastern wing that engulfed Butembo presented a greater challenge than the smaller Kwilu wing headed by the Maoist revolutionary Pierre Mulele. The first major study of the rebellion by Renée Fox, Wally de Cramer, and Jean Marie-Ribeaucourt, argued that the Mulele rebellion was a “revolutionary attempt to correct some of the abuses and injustices by which large segments of the population of the region felt oppressed.” They argued that Mulele sought to provide a subjugated population with a chance “to look forward to the fruit and promises of ‘second Independence.’”<sup>247</sup> Mulele ensured his revolutionaries “did not neglect the ideological preparation” for combat. His recruits were required to imbibe and recite propaganda and Communist literature in order to ensure clarity in the political logic behind their violent actions.<sup>248</sup>

The eastern wing of the rebellion did not fit well into this liberatory framework. Most awkward were the “so-called... magical practices” that the scholars tended to relegate to footnotes.<sup>249</sup> These eastern revolutionaries seemed to neglect the “ideological preparation” of the Kwilu wing. The Fox, De Craemer, and Ribeaucourt study, like other early works on the rebellion, struggled to link the two wings of the movement together beyond the surface level.

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<sup>247</sup> Renée Claire Fox, Willy De Craemer, and J. M. Ribeaucourt, *“The Second Independence”: A Case Study of the Kwilu Rebellion in the Congo* (Mouton & Co., 1965) p 109.

<sup>248</sup> Benoît Verhaegen, *Rebellions Au Congo*, Études Du C.R.I.S.P. (Bruxelles: Centre de recherche et d’information socio-politiques, 1966), p 345. Unpublished work by Emery Kalema offers a useful take on Mulele’s impact and legacies in the DR Congo.

<sup>249</sup> A similar pattern is carried through other prominent studies by Crawford Young, Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, and more recently by Ezimet Kisangani. Benoit Verhaegen’s 1966 *Rebellions au Congo* is a notable exception. Benoit Verhaegen’s seminal *Rebellions au Congo*, published in 1966, adopted a different scale than the pioneering work, treating the movement in a more granular fashion, within, largely, the bounds of Congo’s borders and political vicissitudes. His interpretation tracked closely the infighting among Congo’s emergent political elites and “ethnic” tensions throughout the country. Verhaegen’s approach was to connect ethnically-identified groups with a particular ideology. Language groups were either “progressive” versus “conservative,” “Lumumbaist” versus “pro-government,” “Muleleist” versus “traditionalist,” and so on. Verhaegen also dealt more directly with “the magic” elements of the rebellion, as he called them, but interpreted the *dawa* as a mechanism for maintaining authority. “The absolute necessity for the all Simba to receive a new immunization before each battle ensured their total dependence on the military organization that itself maintained a monopoly over the functions of magic.” From page 353.

The Cold War-dominated, internationalist framing that allowed analytical traction on the Kwilu rebellion made it all the more challenging to interpret the Simba movement. Early work on the rebellions over-determined root causes while failing to explain the recurrence of *mai* movements similar to the Simba Rebellion long after Cold War allegiances fell away.<sup>250</sup>

### **Class and Kin**

For persons living in eastern Congo in 1964, enduring the rebellion, the Cold War seemed at a far remove. The rebels did little to foreground its relevance. None I spoke with in Butembo recalled rebel speeches extolling a particular political line. Anxieties instead concerned perceived sartorial, not political, affronts. Gustave Pengeza remembered that “if someone was wearing trousers he was arrested immediately and killed... We were all obliged to put on short pants... it was cruel.” Simba economic tactics were also difficult to comprehend. “At the Central Bank of Congo branch in Butembo, the Simba looted and then perforated money. Before fleeing, they burned it all.”<sup>251</sup> Pengeza’s memories of this Simba-controlled city reveal the rebels not as “communists and far-leftists,” like many international analysts imagined them to be.<sup>252</sup> They were instead terrorists working against pillars of progress and adult respectability.

Pengeza’s recollections are worth exploring alongside other evidence. His story emerges

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<sup>250</sup> Even the nomenclature is overdetermined. Called by some scholars the Mulele Uprising, the movement was connected to the Kwilu-based rebellion of 1964 led by former Education Minister in Lumumba’s government, Pierre Mulele. However, despite invoking the powerful names of Lumumba and Mulele in their fighting, there is little evidence that the Maoist ideology animating Mulele’s rebellion applied to the Simba (the eastern wing of the rebellion.) Che Guevara who came to assist what he thought was a communist-influenced insurgency was deeply disappointed by the absence of revolutionary thinking among most of the combatants he encountered.

<sup>251</sup> Interview with Pengeza Mumbere Gustave, Mangina, DRC Congo. 27 March 2014,

<sup>252</sup> Confidential letter From Senator Tom Dodd to President Lyndon Baines Johnson, October 27, 1965. United States National Archives: C.F. CO 52 Congo, Republic of (Former Belgian Congo) (1965).

from within a milieu where tales like Mwindo were still being recited, and his life unfolded next to the Katwa mission station where he and others witnessed Paul Hurlburt and his followers sparred sharply in public with Congolese colleagues. He also aspired to a respectable profession—school teaching. His allegiances as a young man, but also an *évolué*, were complex.

Like mission youth described in the previous chapter, wearing shorts hurt Pengeza deeply. For an upwardly mobile aspiring educator and *évolué* such as Pengeza, being forced to wear shorts smacked of colonial era forms of frozen immaturity. Colonial educational order was partly constructed through codes of dress, and a ban on wearing pants for certain categories of Africans was common. Elite educational institutions in East Africa such as King Budo School in Uganda and Alliance School in Kenya banned both African staff and students from wearing pants—a situation found to be “humiliating,” and akin to not “being treated like a man.”<sup>253</sup> To Simba, the “cruelty” of forcing social adults to wear shorts can be interpreted as a kind of symbolic violence. The guardians of respectability and adulthood were being hoisted up on their own petards. Wearing pants was seen as an attempt to integrate with European modes of dress—connected to political reactionaries and “loyalists” associated with the pro-Belgian *Parti National de Progrès* (PNP) that was conservative and anti-independence; the party for “*évolué* African petty elites.”<sup>254</sup>

The demand to wear shorts was, in some people’s mind, linked in mysterious ways to

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<sup>253</sup> Andrew Burton, Andrew Ross Burton, and Helene Charton-Bigot, *Generations Past: Youth in East African History* (Ohio University Press, 2010) p 91.

<sup>254</sup> Mukohya Vwakyanakazi, “African Traders In Butembo, Eastern Zaire (1960-1980): A Case Study of Informal Entrepreneurship in a Cultural Context of Central Africa” (The University of Wisconsin - Madison, 1982) p 158.

Simba imperviousness to “white people’s weapons.”<sup>255</sup> The rebel capacity to neutralize technological disadvantage seemed bound up with a hostility toward emerging norms of class respectability in colonial and postcolonial urban Congo, indexed by many things including the masculine wearing of trousers.<sup>256</sup> The Simba made war against more than the national army. They sought to tear down the pillars of social mobility around which members of a rising class, like Pengeza, steadily imagined the future. Simba targeted indices of prestige and authority, class-based forms all with colonial roots—professionalism, fashion, money, and technology—for erasure and mockery. Such humiliations were deeply destabilizing for a schoolteacher with what Derek Peterson has called “a fervent regard for social discipline” like Pengeza.<sup>257</sup> For Pengeza, rising out of subjugation meant mastery of language, high levels of professionalism, and achieving class respectability. These markers of cosmopolitan difference separated him from those who failed to acquire these markers of upward mobility. The rebellion proved a devastating, if temporary, disruption to his trajectory. Against Pengeza’s decorum came a profane, occult, movement that railed against French, Christian, sartorial airs, and other foundational postures of the “cosmopolitan urban world.”<sup>258</sup>

Pengeza, however, had little to fear beyond damage to his pride. It was only established elites—who dominated economic, religious and political life in Butembo—for whom actual

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<sup>255</sup> Philo Andabo Fidele. Lume. 29 March 2014.

<sup>256</sup> Johannes Fabian, *Language and Colonial Power: The Appropriation of Swahili in the Former Belgian Congo 1880-1938* (University of California Press, 1991) p 140. Fabian describes how the mining conglomerate UMHK focused on dress—and even determined dress codes for workers—to shape class respectability in mining communities.

<sup>257</sup> Derek R. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A History of Dissent, C.1935-1972* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), p 19.

<sup>258</sup> Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism*, p 38.

bodily harm was intended by the rebels. What did shock him was that the tormentors of elite culture were not politically radicalized ethnic outsiders. Most came from within eastern Congolese societies, albeit from its lowest rungs; these were often poor, rag-tag, rural youth. As one woman remembers, “most of our young people were implicated in the rebellion.” She saw the Simba as fellow Nande. To her, the rebels were “us: everybody who died was our brothers and sisters” on both sides.<sup>259</sup> The killers and killed imagined one another as kin, fictive or consanguinal. The authors of the subjugation and humiliation of Pengeza and thousands like him were interpreted as wayward sons, not as Cold War guerillas. The conflict between wild *jeunesse* and established *évolué* was not for a just future for the nation, but for the soul of Bunande.

Bunande is an invented *ethnotope*.<sup>260</sup> It was christened as a supposed Nande “fatherland” by “ethnic patriots” to describe terrain that straddles the vast, agriculturally rich lands of the Semiliki Valley and climbs the northern reaches of Mitumba Mountains as well as the escarpments of the Western Rift Valley, called locally the Albertine. Butembo is the largest population center in this zone.<sup>261</sup> Both the ethnotope, Bunande, and the ethnonym, Nande, are relatively recent inventions, likely coterminous with early incursions by European explorers in the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>262</sup> In the precolonial era, Kinande-speaking groups were not under a

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<sup>259</sup> Aniesi Kahindo, interview in Beni. 27 March, 2014. Second quote is from Kinyata Kasereka from interview in Butembo, 14 March 2014.

<sup>260</sup> I find this term, from Pieter van Wesemael, *Architecture of Instruction and Delight: A Socio-Historical Analysis of World Exhibitions as a Didactic Phenomenon (1798-1851-1970)* (010 Publishers, 2001), p 422 to a useful way to describe an ethnically identified zone.

<sup>261</sup> Derek R. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A History of Dissent, C.1935-1972* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 16. It likely follows the early colonial Belgian description of the area as “*Territoire des Wanande*.”

<sup>262</sup> See page 42 of this dissertation for a possible explanation of how this term emerged.

single political authority or organized under a centralized hierarchy.<sup>263</sup> The proximity of Kinande-speaking persons to commodity-rich zones, both agricultural and mineral, combined with the relative vulnerability of these largely autonomous and acephalous clan-based social structures, made these groups an attractive target for raiders, including Zanzibari slave traders in the nineteenth century.<sup>264</sup> Into the mix of war groups, *ruga-ruga* forces, including Belgian-aligned militia, eclipsed all others in establishing control of the region.

This instability invited the implantation of Belgian military outposts, first established at Beni and Kasindi in 1897, marking the birth of nascent urban zones in Bunande. Belgian officials reported that “full exploitation” of the primarily Kinande-speaking region was “almost null” until after WWI.<sup>265</sup> Even after the pacification of Beni in 1928 and the settlement of Greeks and later Belgians in the region, ongoing insurrections, often interpreted as *Anioto*, troubled colonial control until 1945. The lateness of pacification and the vociferous nature of Kinande-speaking resistance to colonization brought the linguistic community into disfavor. Very few Kinande-speakers went into the state apparatus despite Belgian adoption of strategies of indirect rule.

### **Making a Colonial Economy**

As in much of colonial Congo, but in ways particular to North Kivu, the colonial economy haltingly emerged and was unevenly established. Settler farmers and mining agents relied on forced

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<sup>263</sup> Packard, *Chiefship*, chapter one.

<sup>264</sup> These included the British brigand John Stokes, described in chapter 2, as well as forces allied with the Kinyarwanda-speaking warlord Rwabugiri (see Vwakyankazi and Packard).

<sup>265</sup> Mukohya Vwakyankazi, “African Traders In Butembo, Eastern Zaire (1960-1980): A Case Study of Informal Entrepreneurship in a Cultural Context of Central Africa” (The University of Wisconsin - Madison, 1982), p 124.



labor, using mandatory inclusion tactics such as taxation to compel the participation of African labor. At the same time, much effort went toward preventing Congolese workers from accessing lucrative possibilities the colonial economy offered. Such exclusions were essential to colonial order. Workers, including Hurlburt's evangelists, became interstitial figures proximate to, but not inside, worlds of economic authority and opportunity.

In January of 1928, immediately after Bunande's "pacification" was complete, the Comité National du Kivu (CNKi) was formed. CNKi was an economic development monopoly designed to turn the Kivus into agricultural powerhouses for the colony.<sup>266</sup> The system was, from its inception, highly racialized. Although the Kivu region was home to only four white agriculturalists in 1920, by 1930 there were over 1100 Europeans engaged in farming.<sup>267</sup> To encourage in-migration, CNKi allocated 10,000 hectares of land to each new European migrant for agriculture. The government also offered significant loan funds to provide seed capital for establishing plantations.<sup>268</sup> These aggressive recruitment and support schemes, combined with relatively low population densities of Congolese meant the Kivu region soon had, by far, the highest ratio of whites to black in non-urban Congo. The density of white agriculturalists was by design; the colonial government sought to create what David Northrup called "a second Kenya" in the Kivu region.<sup>269</sup> The state generated conditions where Europeans could flourish without any

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<sup>266</sup> *Vingt-cinquième anniversaire, 1928-1953* (L. Cuypers, 1953).

<sup>267</sup> Bougamil Jewsiewicki, "Le Colonat Agricole Européen au Congo-Belge, 1910-1960: Questions Politiques et Economiques," *The Journal of African History* 20, no. 4 (1979): p. 562

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>269</sup> David Northrup, "Church in Search of a State: Catholic Missions in Eastern Zaire, 1879-1930, A," *Journal of Church and State* 30 (1988): 318.

African competition: cash crops were illegal for Africans to grow until the mid 1950s. To further protect the economic advantages of white settlers in the Kivu provinces, Africans traders were not allocated to purchase and resell quotas of foreign goods, unlike their peers in other provinces.<sup>270</sup> Greeks, brought in to serve as laborers and economic middle figures for Belgians, used their ambiguous status within the Belgian colonial racial structure to travel within and between racial spheres, and engage in profitable trade with Belgians and emerging Nande elites alike. Class distinctions emerged along and across racial lines.

Despite legal barriers, Kinande-speakers found possibilities for profit in smuggling and informal cross-border trade activities.<sup>271</sup> The epicenters of such activity were the emerging urban zones of Beni and Butembo. As the colony approached independence, CNKi's tenure as a state-like entity in the Kivu economy grew vulnerable. The recruitment strategies to lure Belgians to Kivu were all too successful. By 1955, colonial policies restricted the immigration of Belgians to Congo to prevent over mobilization of African labor. The focus was on reducing the need for Congolese workers. This decision was prompted primarily by anxiety about African population decline and birthrates.<sup>272</sup> But there were also fears about efficiency: African laborers, it was claimed, possessed "one-fifth of the productivity of a white worker."<sup>273</sup> Labor reforms in 1955 sought to increase wages in the hopes it would enhance productivity and generate a middle class

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<sup>270</sup> Comité national du Kivu, *Rapport décennal* (Le Comité, 1937).

<sup>271</sup> Timothy Raeymaekers, "The Power of Protection. Governance and Transborder Trade on the Congo-Ugandan Frontier" (Ghent University, 2007), p 62.

<sup>272</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt, "'Le Bebe En Brousse': European Women, African Birth Spacing and Colonial Intervention in Breast Feeding in the Belgian Congo," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 21, no. 3 (1988): 401–432; Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo* (Duke University Press, 1999).

<sup>273</sup> Peter Bird Martin, "To: Walter Johnson re: Native Labor in the Belgian Congo," Institute for Current World Affairs, May 5, 1955.

for whom the temptations of “African nationalists” would be minimal given their privileged positions.<sup>274</sup> A parallel period of labor reform in French Africa is called by Frederick Cooper an era of “imperial equality.” Class formation, in short, was a deliberate colonial strategy designed to segment African society and produce a class of influential elites who found the colonial situation not just tolerable, but even preferable to the uncertainties of independence. These dynamics were playing out in the Kinande-speaking heartlands on the eve of independence.

CNKi’s racialized economics stratified opportunity in the Kivus. For Africans, CNKi was committed to exclusionary, extractive practices and policies. For over two decades, Africans were barred from nearly all economic activities other than the lowest forms of wage labor. As salaries increased with the demand for African labor, and political strategies in Leopoldville changed, dynamics shifted. In Kivu, however, skilled labor was never in high demand, quite unlike in the mining communities of Katanga. Kivu’s economy was founded on cash crop exports. Colonial strategy thus did not incentivize higher levels of education for Kivu’s black population. Opportunities for such training were few and hard-won. Those who fought for an opportunity for uplift were not keen to jeopardize their positions by agitating for broader and more equitable inclusion practices. Quite the opposite.

### **Ambivalent Engagement with the Colonial Economy**

Throughout the colonial era, Butembo’s path toward strategic economic significance came through trading and mining in addition to agriculture. The two major commodities traded in

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<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

precolonial Bunande were ivory and salt.<sup>275</sup> Early Nande traders built wealth from salt, which came from a lake at Katwe in what is now Uganda. This lake was a robust source of salt, and Kinande-speaking groups, especially the Baswaga and Bashu, took advantages of cross border lineage alliances to monopolize the salt trade in the region.<sup>276</sup> The five-day, one hundred fifty-mile journey from Butembo to Katwa was dangerous. Salt gathering groups were vulnerable to raiders on the return journey as they hauled their prized goods. Dangerous work was required to extract the prized white salts from foam deep in the lake. Brown salt could be more easily acquired at the lake rim but was not as flavorful, costly, or desirable.<sup>277</sup>

Ivory came from elephants that took shelter in the massive rainforests around the Semliki River. Ivory was long a strategic commodity in the region, but elephants were still plentiful enough that missionaries shot them and sold their ivory to finance ministry activities through the 1930s. Salt and ivory were only the most important among an array of trade goods, including iron, raffia, livestock, clay, and necklaces, which Nande bought and sold. In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Kinande-speaking zones were brought into the Indian Ocean slave trade and, soon after, formal colonial economies.<sup>278</sup> Both scavenging for salt and hunting were associated with forces of the bush—an interface point with wild power.<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> Mukohya Vwakyankazi, “African Traders In Butembo, Eastern Zaire (1960-1980): A Case Study of Informal Entrepreneurship in a Cultural Context of Central Africa” (The University of Wisconsin - Madison, 1982), p 122; Randall M. Packard, *Chieftship and Cosmology: An Historical Study of Political Competition* (Indiana University Press, 1981) p 219.

<sup>276</sup> Vwakyankazi, “African Traders,” p 117.

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*, p 114.

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>279</sup> Baka-speaking people, apocryphally called “pygmies,” are the figures most associated with hunting in Kinande-speaking communities. Wearing skins, avoiding washing, and being vulnerable to the influences of the *ekisoki* were all associated with Baka identification. The Simba indexed some of these elements of Baka identity and were seen, similarly, as forest people in their time under the influence of the *mai*.

But the wilds were not the source of most households' sustenance. For the vast majority the primary means of livelihood before, during, and after the colonial era was agriculture. Randall Packard argues that Kinande-speaking communities were innovators of land tenure systems in the northern Mitumba Mountain regions—migrating in with notions that “clearing the land” established tenure.<sup>280</sup> Agriculture, like lineage-based land tenure systems, became hallmarks of Nande society in the region. In the colonial era, new regimes of land tenure, like those established by CNKi, competed with older systems. With this came significant social change.<sup>281</sup> Land competition, rarely a precolonial problem in a region with low population densities, emerged powerfully in the face of massive terrain holdings by an emerging cadre of Belgian farmers.<sup>282</sup>

Coffee soon proved the most lucrative crop for white settlers. Though coffee would, nearly three decades later, be the commodity that launched Kinande-speaking traders into significant wealth, it was not legally planted by Africans until 1954, and even then against European coffee farmers' vociferous objections.<sup>283</sup> Loan capital was unavailable to Africans through most of the colonial era. They thus had no subsidies for start-up costs for coffee farms until 1956 when credit for Africans was first made available.<sup>284</sup> This meant that those requiring credit to start commercially viable farms—a group that included all Africans, long excluded from

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<sup>280</sup> Packard, *Chiefship*, p.66.

<sup>281</sup> Summarized well in Nelson, *Missionizing*, p 37.

<sup>282</sup> See for example “Unrest in the Eastern Congo,” *Africa Today* 2, no. 3 (1955): p. 8. From the mid-1955 attempts to produce a more equitable “multi-racial” economy were vociferously fought by white settlers.

<sup>283</sup> Janet. MacGaffey, *Entrepreneurs and Parasites: The Struggle for Indigenous Capitalism in Zaire*, African Studies Series (Cambridge University Press, 1987), p 124.

<sup>284</sup> MacGaffey, *Entrepreneurs*, p 176.

profitable agriculture— would not see their first yields from coffee trees until 1959. All profits from coffee production for African farmers came only after independence. In this milieu, prestige in the wage economy was difficult to earn. Pressure on elder males to accumulate wealth for the acquisition of followers motivated venal, exploitative practices toward juniors. Resource scarcity, real or imagined, compelled Kinande-speaking elites to push down juniors who might become potential competitors and so as not to lose a crucial source of cheap labor.

Mining was also an important driver of economic activity in the colonial era. The company *Compagnie Minière du Grand Lacs* (MGL), established in Butembo in 1928, became the administrative entity behind all mining in North Kivu. By 1945, approximately one third of all male labor in the territory was mobilized for the mining sector.<sup>285</sup> The MGL earned concessionary privileges, including exclusive mining rights over a territory double the size of Belgium, by investing in rail infrastructure in eastern Congo. Even with a mining monopoly, labor proved difficult to mobilize, so incentives were offered to entice men to move to mining zones. One miner in the 1930s recounted: “When I arrived at the [mines] in 1938, everything was there in abundance: manioc, meat, beans and clothes...in the mining camps you easily forgot village life and detested it.”<sup>286</sup> The promises of mining prosperity stirred class formation. Access to goods and foods linked mine labor with forms of abundance unattainable in village life. Urban life and its opportunities for self-mastery appealed to many. A kind of urban aspirational lifestyle quickly took hold, and the obligations of kin in the village became perceived, even by non-elites, as a nuisance.

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<sup>285</sup> Randall Packard, *Chiefship*, p 138. In addition, even Charles Hurlburt was employed on and off by the MGL to practice dentistry. He did this to supplement his missionary support income during the depression primarily. This is described on page 64 of Nelson, *Missionizing*.

<sup>286</sup> A quote from Taberangwa Gogolelo from Mashagi, *Le Cobelmin* pg 125, as quoted in Northrup, *Beyond the Bend*, p 208.

Soon, the investments in infrastructure and labor paid off for the MGL. By 1939 it was annually exporting nearly three tons of gold from the Kivus.<sup>287</sup> MGL was responsible for building virtually all of the connective road networks in the region in order to facilitate the exportation of raw materials.<sup>288</sup> For a generation of Congolese men, the only meaningful possibilities for engaging in wage labor—necessary to meet colonial tax burdens—were on Belgian farms or the five MGL mines in the region. The arrival of independence dramatically affected the fortunes of these wage laborers. Between 1958 and 1962 all formal sectors employing wage laborers—agriculture, industrial manufacturing, construction, transportation, commerce, and finance—saw massive employment retraction. Some sectors, like construction, lost as much as sixty percent of the work force.<sup>289</sup> Nationally, more than half of all mine work ended between 1958 and 1964. In Butembo, the 1963 closures of all MGL mines led to economic deprivation in the Congo Crisis years.<sup>290</sup> Wage laborers looked to kith and kin for sustenance. Intense pressure on a small cadre of emerging elites was exacerbated by the collapse of ancillary markets of trade goods that came with the decline of large mining projects like MGL. Further difficulties came with the closure of politically powerful business associations such as the Professional Association of the Middle Classes of Kivu (UNAKI), an exclusively white organization. With the end of the associations, so too went infrastructure development services to

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<sup>287</sup> Reference is from Bayonzi, *Kilo Moto* dissertation, p 8. Given that the average per ounce of gold in 1939 was 35 dollars, and that one dollar in 1939 is equal to about 100 dollars today, the MGL was making as much as the equivalent of three billion dollars a year from its mines in Congo at the time.

<sup>288</sup> F. J. Erroll, "Transport in Africa: Impressions from a Recent Journey," *Journal of the Royal African Society* 36, no. 142 (1937): p 52 describes the "very fine road system through mountainous country" produced by the MGL.

<sup>289</sup> Coquery-Vidrovitch, Forest, and Weiss, *Rébellions-Révolution Au Zaïre, 1963-1965*, p 88.

<sup>290</sup> A study of this is Frans Buelens and Stefaan Marysse, "Returns on Investments during the Colonial Era: The Case of the Belgian Congo," *The Economic History Review* 62, no. S1 (2009): 135–66. They demonstrate that, as early as 1928, mines in eastern Congo were earning around 15% of Belgium's entire GDP.

the region, once generously supported by state financing.

The point here is that the racialized colonial economy profoundly shaped postcolonial prosperity. It established economic structures of exclusion and stratification as normative—even intrinsic to the functioning of the economic system. Very few Africans crossed the threshold of independence with existing wealth. In 1961 just five individual Congolese businessmen had established significant commercial holdings within all of Bunande.<sup>291</sup> By 1970, however, dozens of Butembo traders would fill the ranks of Congo's most powerful and wealthy emerging African elite.<sup>292</sup> The economic transformation happened remarkably quickly. In a single generation—the generation of decolonization—ninety percent of Butembo's core trading families moved from subsistence agriculture and into commercial trading.<sup>293</sup> Former farmers, not wage-earning miners, first grasped the possibilities for wealth accumulation in the post-colonial economy. These emerging African big men worked to shape a respectable elite class. They used their new wealth and opportunities to consolidate authority and power. The first signs of the impending violence against *Bubolais* elites came amidst a storm of interethnic violence.

## **Kanyarwanda**

In the twilight months of Belgian Congo, anti-Tutsi rioting and violence in Rwanda led to massive displacement of Kinyarwanda-speakers into North Kivu province. Between 1959 and

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<sup>291</sup> Vwakyankazi, "African Traders," p 158.

<sup>292</sup> MacGaffey, *Entrepreneurs*.

<sup>293</sup> Vwakyankazi, "African Traders," p 235.



1962, thousands of Tutsi resettled in Congo. Though significant, this migration of refugees was only the most recent among a long history of population transfers from Rwanda into eastern Congo. From 1937 to 1955 the Belgian government coordinated the *Mission d'Immigration des Banyarwanda* with two primary goals. Population transfer was meant to alleviate resource pressures caused by famine in Rwanda while supplying much needed labor in Kivu's tea and coffee plantations. Most migrants in these first waves were identified by Kivutiens as "Hutu." In 1959, a "social revolution" transformed Rwanda's internal politics. A flood of Tutsi-identified persons fled to the Kivus to escape this purge. They found themselves in a highly competitive and exclusionary economic world where tensions among Kinande-speakers over limited resources was already fevered.

By 1963, claims to autochthony and pressures on increasingly densely populated lands came to a head.<sup>294</sup> Just a year before the Simba Rebellion, from within Kinande-speaking communities youth were mobilized in large numbers to seize and control lands in unofficial borderlands between Bunande and regions of eastern dominated by the so-called Banyarwanda.<sup>295</sup> This violence was meant to push back ethnic competitors and secure tenure opportunities for Kinande-identified peoples. An escalating series of attacks and reprisals took ensued. Known as Kanyarwanda, this era was characterized by an "orgy of violence," according to Rene Lemarchand.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>294</sup> For an in-depth treatment of this, see Stephen Jackson, "Sons of Which Soil? The Language and Politics of Autochthony in Eastern D.R. Congo," *African Studies Review* 49, no. 2 (2006): 95–123.

<sup>295</sup> Mulenge is the name of the *chefferie* that first provided succor to Rwandan migrants and became a zone from which they built their key population centers.

<sup>296</sup> Lemarchand, *The Dynamics of Violence in Central Africa*, 2011.

Most relevant to this chapter was the dramatic shift in the targets of violence during the conflict. In the early stages male Nande elites sent juniors to purge Kinyarwanda speakers from contested lands. Within months, however, elites found themselves under attack—not by ethnic competitors— but by juniors from their own communities. According to Koen Vlassenroot, Kinyarwanda ended up as a “rebellion against chiefly abuse and the first step of a spiral of unending violence.”<sup>297</sup> Despite population pressure, economic restrictions, and tensions within neighboring groups, it was local chiefs, the architects and preservers of Bunande, who ended up subject to violence from their own kin. Elites’ attempts at fostering a double exclusion—lineage juniors as economic competitors, and elites from other language-speaking groups from land claims—backfired. They found themselves under attack from within and without.

Understanding this shift is key in resolving the interplay between events occurring at multiple scales and by numerous actors in motivating the Simba rebellion. The clearest, most direct antecedent movement to the Simba movement in North Kivu was neither the Mulele Rebellion nor localized versions of the Cold War’s struggle between left and right. Rather the most important antecedent was young people rising up against their elders in the late days of Kinyarwanda, resisting co-option and exclusion from an emerging class of economic and political elites.<sup>298</sup> Dynamics here are well framed by John Lonsdale, who argues that “Class formation anywhere, we can now see, is a process that can be intellectually grasped (and morally judged) only by reference to some former moral economy that (we must imagine) once governed

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<sup>297</sup> Koen Vlassenroot and Timothy Raeymaekers, *Conflict and Social Transformation in Eastern DR Congo* (Academia Press, 2004), p 76.

<sup>298</sup> Koen Vlassenroot also describes the rise of Banyamulenge Tutsi anti-Simba emerging in 1964 called *Abagiriye* that was meant to defend these communities against the Simba. P 26. (Rift Valley Institute Usalama Project 10 report on South Kivu, 2013)

the politics of known reputation”<sup>299</sup> The tensions of class formation at the confluence of decolonizing economies and new political risk and opportunity were felt deeply by juniors who longed to reinstate the bounds of a moral economy they saw fading in the face of elite accumulation. A violent reminder of obligation seemed to be required.

The economic situation was not, however, the whole story. Prior to the outbreak of rebellion, the most intense competition against emerging economic elites came from another group of rising social leaders. This group discerned potential political opportunities in the obvious stirrings of youth resentment. Here the register of global leftist thought *did* provide a powerful lexicon for emerging political figures to draw on.

### **Party Politics & Ethnic Patriotism**

The formal political sphere offered another context for rising elites to stake claims to authority and jockey for position in the postcolony. Political transformations played out against the backdrop of economic tensions. Ultimately, political divides further alienated constituencies from elites in the Kivu.

Nationally, the jarring arrival of independence generated complex operational conditions at every level of the public sector. Seventeen of the first cohort of national legislators, for instance, were illiterate.<sup>300</sup> The political transition and secession of key technocrats in Katanga who ensured the smooth functions of the state created both chaos and opportunities. The party

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<sup>299</sup> John Lonsdale, “Moral Ethnicity and Political Tribalism,” in *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism*, ed. Preben Kaarlschholm and Jan Hultin (Institute for Development Studies, Roskilde University, 1994) p 119.

<sup>300</sup> René Lemarchand, *Political Awakening in the Belgian Congo* (University of California Press, 1964), pg. 228.

that most successfully capitalized on the complex milieu of decolonization in the Kivus was the *Centre de Regroupement Africain* (CEREA), founded in July 1958.<sup>301</sup>

CEREA, like all major political movements at independence was highly regionalized and leaned heavily on the rhetoric of ethnic identification to build a constituency. The party was so regionalized it had no political base or officials serving in office outside of the Kivu province.<sup>302</sup> Within Kivu, however, it was dominant. CEREA symbolized, as much as any ideology, representation for Kivutiens in the central government—a domain from which they were historically excluded, for reasons described in the previous chapter of this dissertation. CEREA itself was subdivided into regional bases. The individual representing what is now North Kivu was described as a “militant bank employee” named Jean Miruho.<sup>303</sup> All the political officers elected from his electoral zone were Kinande-speakers.<sup>304</sup> The success of CEREA in Congo’s first elections, winning ten seats, was called by contemporary observers a “spectacular breakthrough” for a party once seen as a marginal force on the national scene.<sup>305</sup>

Given the overt and intrinsic Nande-ness of the movement, the rise of CEREA as a force in eastern Congo was the first major deployment of Nande “ethnic identity in political competition with other groups,” following John Lonsdale definition of “political tribalism.”<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>301</sup> Koen Vlassenroot’s translation is “African Rallying Center” (from Rift Valley Institute Usalama Project 10 report on South Kivu, 2013, p 24). It could also be translated Center for African Regrouping.

<sup>302</sup> Nelson, *Missionizing*, p 131.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid.

<sup>304</sup> Outside of CEREA, however, individuals from Nande communities specifically, and North Kivu more broadly, were largely absent from the government. This was true in both the national government and among the various secessionist groups. Moïse Tshombe’s breakaway Government of the State of Katanga, established on July 11, 1960, included only one Kivutien in the cabinet: Leon Mamboleo who was included because he received a Doctor of Law from the University of Lovanium in 1963.

<sup>305</sup> J. Gerard-Libois, “Comment Le Congo a Accédé À L’indépendance,” *Civilisations* 10, no. 3 (1960): p. 342.

<sup>306</sup> Lonsdale, “Moral Ethnicity and Political Tribalism,” p 132.

The racial tensions of Kivu, which René Lermarchand argued were the highest of anywhere in Congo, and the ethnic consolidation of parties across Congo gave CERECA an ethnonational flavor that appealed to many Nande.<sup>307</sup> CERECA attempted to link this politicization of ethnicity with a pledge to redistribute white-owned lands and wealth to the people of the province. Theirs was a project of inverting the strategies of economic exclusion that established North Kivu's stratified class structures. At the same time, CERECA leaders sought to leverage bonds of ethnic affiliation—a move that worked against class frameworks of economic disparity. Elites within CERECA and in economic circles sought to instrumentalize filial sentiments while seeking to avoid becoming subject to the responsibilities borne of kinship.

The leaders of CERECA promised a role-reversal for its voters—where finally Africans would hold the advantages and whites would be subject to their own humiliations. Popular artwork at the time depicted whites in shorts bending over to receive blows from the *chicotte* whip held by Congolese police officers.<sup>308</sup> The radical, inversionary imaginary of CERECA found its antithesis in the conservative *Parti National de Progrès* (PNP) that was supported heavily by Belgians and was seen as reactionary, pro-colonial party. Much of the tension leading up the rebellion split the population into CERECA and PNP supporters. The architect of CERECA's political strategy was the founder of the party, Anicet Kashamura. Kashamura advocated immediate independence and became an early ally of Patrice Lumumba, consolidating his support in eastern Congo. He was made the first Minister of Information in Lumumba's cabinet.

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<sup>307</sup> Lemarchand, *Political Awakening*, p 78.

<sup>308</sup> Interview with Kahi Kambale, Oicha, June 11 2014.

After Lumumba's death, Kashamura launched a rebel movement. His political fortunes declined after he declared an autonomous Government of Kivu that was quickly crushed by the ANC.<sup>309</sup>

CEREA's radical platform proved a fertile developing ground for future rebel leaders. Gaston Soumialot, who became the military chief of the Simba movement, was originally a CEREA partisan and gained his political footing in the party apparatus. For him and others, the party's weakness was its unwillingness to be truly radical. While still formally part of CEREA Soumialot and Christophe Gbenye helped form a secessionist government, the Congolese Popular Republic, headed by the National Council for Liberation based in Albertville, what is now Bukavu.<sup>310</sup> For the most radical members of CEREA and its offshoots, the rhetoric of economic redistribution was insufficient. The problem went deeper than racialized land holdings. For young people, even Soumialot and Gbenye's views failed to penetrate the everyday rhetoric and practices of the rebellion, where the logic of the *mai* medicine totally displaced formal political discourse. In the end, elites of all classes failed to grasp that Simba warriors sought change that could not be undone. Simba sought a restoration of order not along the lines of political left but recalling deep registers of reciprocity and accountability.<sup>311</sup>

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<sup>309</sup> Crawford Young, "The Congo Rebellion," *Africa Report* 10, no. 4 (1965): 6–11; and Crawford Young, "Rebellion and the Congo," *Protest and Power in Black Africa*, 1970, 968–1011.

<sup>310</sup> "Lettre confidentielle de M. Soumialot (26 Juillet 1964)" from CRISP (1964) p 215.

<sup>311</sup> As early as January 1964 Soumialot began utilizing his CEREA-established networks in the region to begin recruiting youth into his new Simba movement. Many Kinande-speaking youths joined the movement. The Simba movement, CEREA, and MNC-L became inextricably linked in the state's imagination. After the ANC conquered the movement former members of CEREA and MNC-L were rounded up and killed by government forces—some reports indicate three thousand were killed in North Kivu (From 1986 dissertation from Kisnagani). CEREA's regional leader, Jean Muriho, was a "radical bank employee." This is a relevant fact. His background demonstrates how local elites used CEREA's purported radicalism to their own ends. Muriho and his fellows blamed racial inequality for economic disparity. At the same time, they sought to shift kin expectations away from themselves after taking the reigns over emerging economic regimes. CEREA elites shifted from registers of restitution to othering practices of political tribalism to offset the weight of expectation, obligation, and anger that came with newfound economic power. It is worth noting, if not overstating, that Simba specifically targeted banks in Butembo and destroyed currency. These institutions were run by local elites of a kind with, and indeed included, Jean Muriho. Ultimately the alliances between CEREA's operatives and nascent rebels was too tenuous to maintain. Elite infighting at regional and national levels broke out, sabotaging the political movement. Jean Muriho, described by Célestin Nguya-Ndila Malengana as emblematic of Kivu's "new

## Conclusion

Anthropologist Kristien Geenen writes about the appearance of a new variety of water hyacinth in Butembo in 1958. Quite a fuss was made of it by elite *Bubolais*. They dubbed the plant “the New Congo.” Prints of the fauna proliferated across town. The flower served, Geenen argues, as a mythic representation of the efflorescent potential of an imminently postcolonial city. Long after independence such representations persist and continue to be celebrated. Geenen writes: “The outward glorification is backed by *Bubolais*’ profound belief that they are a chosen people, chosen to exemplify *how things should work*.... [the myth of the flower] smothers discordant voices, veils, social stratification, and consequently suits Butembo’s powerful elite, who have a keen interest in keeping the myth alive.”<sup>312</sup> Geenen cites an event in 2009, during her fieldwork, where members of Butembo’s upper class gathered. The participants were “the big traders and their wives, the clergy, the city authorities and the security forces.”<sup>313</sup> There is a powerful symmetry here with dynamics from over fifty years prior. The constituent groups of the *Bubolais* elite are essentially unchanged from 1964. Authority resides in the hands of economic, religious, and local political elites.<sup>314</sup> The Simba were present at the genesis of this clustered, entangled

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political class” composed of “elite évolué” ended up in a serious political conflict and lost his position. CERECA dissolved as the first Simba deployments were taking place. As elites battled one another for control, young people dropped out of the movement, seeking a more authentic challenge to elite power. Ultimately, they found forms of dissent by drawing on old tales of moral responsibility. The greatest threat to emerging powers-that-be would come from within their own ranks, and not via placing elites one against the other.

<sup>312</sup> Kristien Geenen, “How the People of Butembo (RDC) Were Chosen to Embody ‘the New Congo’: Or What the Appearance of a Poster in a City’s Public Places Can Teach about Its Social Tissue: The Chosen People of Butembo and ‘the New Congo,’” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 36, no. 3 (May 2012): p. 457.

<sup>313</sup> Ibid.

<sup>314</sup> This chapter does not discuss, in detail, the rise of African Christian elites within Protestant circles. That said, if customary and economic privilege were under assault during the decolonization period, early post-colonial Congo saw upheaval and transformation in religious communities as well. Economic dynamics were changing in ways that destabilized and recalibrated

aggregation of interdependent elites. They sought to disrupt the formation of what has proven to be a durable power structure—a constellation that dominates public life in Butembo today. The failure of rebel violence to disrupt this cadre was, it seems, total.

This chapter lays out the methods, discourses, and practices of exclusion that led to both rebellion and consolidations of power. The core theme was the process, passing through the independence period, of class formation: manifest in economic and political life in decolonizing Congo. The lead up to rebellion was marked by attempts from Congolese youth in diverse domains to pursue few, carefully guarded spots at the tables of power and position. Gatekeeping

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class order. The “ecclesiastical quarrel” that emerged among Protestants in 1959, (described in the previous chapter), came to a full boil in 1962 and 1963 with a schism within the largest Protestant group: the Baptists. Two factions emerged. One was a minority of adherents who supported the ongoing leadership of Hurlburt and his cadre of American missionaries, called “loyalists.” The majority supported African leadership of the protestant denominations, and called themselves Synodists (Vwakyanakazi, p 161). For the Synodists, their claims for greater power within the church hierarchy necessitated the formation of an association, or synod, to counter missionaries’ organizations. Decades of exclusion—characterized by unequal salaries, control of dress, removal from processes of decision making, and the foreclosure of avenues to adulthood through practices like circumcision—were to be replaced by their full participation in the leadership of the church. For all the contention, emerging Congolese religious elites were drawing on the same registers of respectability as their missionary adversaries. They were invested in creating small, stable families, dressing and speaking in an urbane fashion, and generating community within the church, not primarily from kin networks. Even so, to many missionaries, and some lay people, this expansion of the boundaries of authority was not acceptable, and the concept of a synod was contrary to the foundational precepts of the Baptist movement. They argued it reeked of a “heretical, Catholic type” form of church organization (Nelson, *Missionizing*, p 138) Missionaries humiliated dissenting congregants. One wrote, “We try to treat them as disobedient children who won’t get their supper until they do what we say.” (Letter from Don Nelson to Milton Baker, 2 May 1961, in the Billy Graham Center Archives, quoted in Nelson, *Missionizing*, p 142.) Lay people within the church were split. Most Kinande-speaking people, in Bunande and beyond, supported the Synodist movement, but Kinyarwanda speakers in North Kivu tended to support missionary-led or loyalist churches. These tensions exacerbated the land conflicts described earlier. Upwardly mobile youth supported the Synodist camp and were actively recruited as a potential base for emerging radical political parties such as CERE, discussed above. (Nelson, *Missionizing*, p 140) Tensions continued to rise. Missionaries were attacked at multiple protestant mission sites in 1960 and an exodus began. Within a year of independence all Baptist missionaries had been evacuated to Uganda—most of whom returned permanently to the United States. They bemoaned a “communist takeover” of Congo that had orchestrated a church schism by manipulating “young radicals.” (Nelson, *Missionizing*, p 156) The dispute continued and was so serious that determining legal control over the church required a presidential letter from Joseph Kasa-Vubu, who determined that the loyalist faction were the legal owners of the church and its properties and projects. (Nelson, *Missionizing*, p 173). The ecclesiastical conflict continued until the Simba rebellion swept into Bunande and overwhelmed all other quarrels. When Butembo was brought back under the control of the national army, a number of young Synodists were accused of aiding the Simba. They were imprisoned and tortured. (Nelson, *Missionizing*, p 192-193) Despite these deep divisions, and the complexity and chaos of the era, the theological tenants and organizing structures of the Protestant movements remained broadly similar. What is essential here is the fact that the rising Congolese religious professionals who sought to claim their manhood and force missionaries to cede control were themselves constituting an emerging vernacular elite category. Their investment in the norms and discourses of respectability animated their opposition to white domination in the church, but when in control they maintained the deeply conservative approach to empowering social juniors their American missionary forbearers instituted. Even though perceived, by some, to lean toward “radical-nationalist” tendencies, the pews of Baptist churches did not become freewheeling, democratic spaces of opportunity for all in the postcolony. (Nelson, *Missionizing*, p 192) Elites passed power to other elites. A small cadre of Congolese religious elites—the leaders of the Synodists simply replaced a small cadre of American authorities. The structures of power and hierarchy were preserved. Though economically impoverished, the social capital afforded by respectability gave religious elites a place at the table of power in independent Congo.



adults experienced their own vulnerabilities in seeking to stabilize fortunes and protect their interests in times of uncertainty and possibility. Economic opportunity focused elite attention beyond kin relations toward other networks of emergent power and access to wealth. CEREAL leaders adopted a strategy of demagoguery: elites mobilizing lower class violence—much as lineage elders had done during Kanyarwanda against ethnically identified enemies.

Young people found doors to social maturity and respectability closed. All paths went through gatekeeping elites. Opportunities for accessing authority and influence were tantalizingly close but ultimately unrealizable. Intense resentment, frustration, and a mood of dissent took hold. Many young Nande who yearned for responsibility in domestic spheres of business, church, and politics initially sought non-violent means to such ends. Some maintained allegiance to elites, waiting and hoping, like Gustave Pengeza, for their turn. These figures dutifully passed through the slow process of advancement through loyalty to authority and fidelity to norms of class respectability. Those who became Simba, by contrast, sought radical alternatives to these forms of power. They leveraged leveling medicines against those who held the doors shut.

In tracing tensions across a middle scale between the global and the individual, this chapter focused on a narrower swath of time and a more intimate geography than earlier chapters. By maintaining a middle scale and examining manifold trajectories across a political economy that influenced Simba antecedents, this chapter placed the Butembo rebellion within a complex lattice of time and space. It sets up the experience in the next chapter of a personal history of violence and rebellion.

A global Cold War lens, as found in existing scholarship on the Simba Rebellion, provides vital perspective. Without the global tensions and the interventions of the United States, Belgian-

and Soviet-aligned powers and maneuvers, the era would be incomprehensible. But to understand the dynamics and causal forces for an insurgency that ran across generations and classes it is also essential to trace more intimate afflictions and affects that motivated individuals, their participation, experiences, and memories. Remember Pengeza: the affective matters of prestige and humiliation illuminate key dimensions that stirred an entire movement with many actors on all sides.<sup>315</sup> The Simba's inversions of norms of respectability threatened the core of people like Pengeza's life's work. The rebels tested the very foundations of authority, and sought to produce, through violence, an entirely new order.

When deep legacies of exclusion from the colonial era, as we saw in chapters two and three, met postcolonial frustrations around the walled garden of elite class formation in cities like Butembo, the conditions were ripe for insurgency.

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<sup>315</sup> Veena Das, *Affliction: Health, Disease, Poverty* (Fordham University Press, 2015).

## Chapter Five: Henri's Rebellion: A Microhistory of the Simba Movement, 1964-1967

“Enter the Simba to give us strength, to get rid of our enemies,” went the speech, brevity belying its vast implications for some in the audience. Commandant<sup>316</sup> Augustin Bendela, a slight young man in generic battle fatigues, was the orator. For some time in midday heat the audience, citizens of a small village on the northeastern edge of Congo’s rainforest, awaited Bendela’s words. A fresh corpse sweltered between them and the commandant. This village was called Makeke, a clutch of mud homes on the northeastern rim of the Congo Basin rainforest. It was late July, 1964.<sup>317</sup> Bendela’s speech was well practiced. It was not, however, in strict alignment with the scripted elements of a recruitment process set up by his superiors in the *Armée Populaire de la Libération* (APL) for “newly liberated regions.”<sup>318</sup> The APL was an emerging movement, constituted by decree of the National Revolutionary Council (CNL), a rebel government, on April 15, 1964.<sup>319</sup> Three months later, APL forces arrived in Makeke. To the

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<sup>316</sup> This was the term the Simba used for the leader of a *peloton*, the basic military unit. This claim is triangulated from the story of Henri, though he calls him only commandant, and the information in the CRISP 1964 archival volume.

<sup>317</sup> Makeke is named for a stand of Keke trees that stood where the village is now before living memory. Though it not clear what species, precisely, the term Keke refers to it is probably the *Dialium guineense*. This is a tree, also called the velvet tamarind tree, that is not commonly found in North Kivu, as it is native to thick forests of the sub-Saharan belt farther north. In those regions it is also called, popularly, “keke.” I derive this conclusion from the claim in Takayoshi Kan, *The Last Ape: Pygmy Chimpanzee Behavior and Ecology* (Stanford University Press, 1992) that people in the Wamba forest region also called this species “keke.”

<sup>318</sup> GM Ekolo, “le Recrutement des Simbas” written on October 17, 1964. Document reprinted in Benoît. Verhaegen, “Congo 1964,” *Princeton University Press*, 1966, p. 304 This archive will be called CRISP 1964 from hereon.

<sup>319</sup> From “Le programme d’action du CNL,” written by the CNL, and issued on April 15, 1964. CRISP 1964: p 41-43

people of the village, and others in eastern Congo, soldiers of the APL were known by another name: Simba.

From a military standpoint, Makeke's strategic importance to the Simba derived from its position astride a vital sinew of road connecting east Africa to Kisangani, a river city linking Congo's northeast to the capital, Kinshasa. The *chef du poste* (CP) of Makeke was named Zakaria Kaiteni. As rumors circulated concerning the Simba's arrival he denounced the movement, insisting he would refuse them access to the community. Commandant Bendela's arrival was preceded by many weeks of talk on *radio trottoir*<sup>320</sup> that made clear the Simba were en route to the village, out from their strongholds in Kisangani zone. Two weeks prior to their arrival in Makeke the Simba took the large town of Mambasa, one hundred ten kilometers to the west. Then days later they reached Bela village, six kilometers to the west of Makeke. Unlike Kaiteni, CP Ambrose of Bela fled the city before the Simba's arrival. In response to rumors some in Makeke openly celebrated the impending arrival of the rebels despite, or perhaps even inspired by, the violence they reportedly committed. These were people ready for what they hoped would be a liberation movement.<sup>321</sup> Henri Makoba, fourteen-years-old at the time, remembers that those who welcomed the Simba "did not know what war was. But those who knew war were afraid. And once the war came, the results for everyone were terrible."<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>320</sup> Literally "sidewalk radio." This phenomenon is observed and, perhaps, most fully analyzed in Cornelis Nlandu-Tsasa's *La Rumeur Au Zaïre de Mobutu. Radio-Trottoir À Kinshasa* (Paris, L'Harmattan, 1997).

<sup>321</sup> An early study by Renée Claire Fox, Willy De Craemer, and J. M. Ribeaucourt in their "*The Second Independence*": *A Case Study of the Kwilu Rebellion in the Congo*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (October, 1965) describe this era as characterized by a "chain" of "social revolutions" that came to be known as the Congo Crisis period in later scholarship.

<sup>322</sup> This and many other quotes in this piece are primarily drawn from three interviews conducted with Henri Makoba in the village of Makeke, North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo. The first occurred in April, 2014, a second on June 9, 2015, and the final conversation in September 2016.

When Bendela and his troops arrived in Makeke, they denounced Kaiteni as a reactionary threat to the Simba movement. Kaiteni attempted to flee but was captured. Henri describes the scene that followed. “They called everyone in the village to come, even children. Then they murdered Kaiteni there. If someone did not participate or recoiled, they killed them too... No one could act sad, everyone had to celebrate.” As Kaiteni fell under the blows and cheers of his townspeople, the direct consequences of war were first felt in Makeke. With Kaiteni dead, a key representative of the prevailing system of authority in the area, Commandant Bendela was ready to deliver his short address. His appeal was to the young men and boys<sup>323</sup> of the village: “Enter the Simba to give us strength, to get rid of our enemies.” In Henri’s memory, that was all he said. Then the Simba began singing. “It was like a game, like a party,” Henri remembers. “They danced beautiful dances. They sang very beautiful songs.”

Bendela’s rhetoric was direct and simple. He was not providing an argument for his audience to weigh on its merits. He did not offer a fresh point of view to consider. The divergent elements and moods of the recruitment ceremony, lurching between speech, murder and dance, evoked what Bakhtin called “carnavalesque travesty.”<sup>324</sup> Henri’s memories of the event are run through with a deep feeling of strangeness, imbuing his voice with a sense of wonder and confusion—perhaps even fear—fifty-one years later as he describes the event to me. The moment of community murder was, for Henri and his kin, when the barrier between the Simba as actors and villagers as audience broke down.<sup>325</sup> As Henri shares his memories I realize we are sitting a stone’s throw from where they killed Kaiteni, Bendela spoke, and the songs were sung.

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<sup>323</sup> In a group interview in Makeke on June 9, 2015 one informant specifically noted that the address was to “*enfants et garçons*” in Makeke.

<sup>324</sup> Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Indiana University Press, 1984) p 13, 98.

<sup>325</sup> Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, p 348.

As we speak the skies begins to shade gray. Vast rain clouds gather, shrouding Makeke in midday twilight. The humidity spikes, and sheets of rain douse the impossible expanse of the Congo Basin forest to our west. As we sit in the heat and shadow Henri's memories unfold. He is a slender man, sixty-five-years-old. His back is ramrod straight as he perches on a low stool. Henri's hair is cut short, salted with white, his eyes keen and piercing. I begin to ask him about the songs the Simba sang, what he could remember of them, but before I finish the query Henri's voice rises:

*Alo, alo, ee*  
*Mama Maria*  
*Yakonoki biso*  
*Tokufeli mukili*<sup>326</sup>

Mother Mary  
Come quickly  
Our country is dying.

He repeats the song three times. "They had very beautiful songs," he says again. I nod. It is a beautiful song. Henri's voice is clear and strong. When he finishes, we are quiet for a time. Henri described few details about the spectacle of Kaiteni's death, perhaps he did not remember them, or perhaps they were too terrible to recall and speak out loud. The words and melody of the song, by contrast, were available to him as though lurking just beneath the surface of his memory. The performance was so immediate it almost seemed involuntary. The "acoustic debris" of this short song lingered in Henri's memory for decades, and something about it seemed to somehow anchor Henri's memories of the period in a way different from other forms

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<sup>326</sup> This original song was sung in Lingala, and the English version is the authors translation of Henri's translation into Swahili of the song.

of memory.<sup>327</sup> He shifts at this point from describing the community's reaction to the Simba into the details of his own story. "There were five who went that day. Constant, Katuba, Bebe Viyaka, and Katsongo. And me." Five boys from Makeke became Simba that day in July, 1964.

The sky above Makeke is now full of shadow. We sweat in the stifling heat. The thunderheads are ripe to burst. Henri is not looking at the sky. He is looking at our feet. Then he says, "Remembering this wartime brings me great discomfort. It is really bothering me. We are talking now and its bringing some things to me. Some painful things. Looking back at this time feels like I am looking at a snake."<sup>328</sup>

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The instigators of these painful memories—those who came to Makeke with speech, songs, and medicine—were strangers. The Simba *peloton*<sup>329</sup> arrived the very day of the recruitment event, a band of Lingala-speaking young men using a dialect that revealed their origins to be from zones west of Makeke. Commandant Bendela's *peloton*, and myriad like it, were proliferating throughout eastern Congo in the summer of 1964. Each gathered young villagers in a similar fashion. The movement grew in this manner—quickly and powerfully. At its height the Simba forces were estimated to be in the tens of thousands, described as "hordes of many children" by contemporaneous journalists.<sup>330</sup> The young men and boys were

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<sup>327</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt, "An Acoustic Register, Tenacious Images, and Congolese Scenes of Rape and Repetition," *Cultural Anthropology* 23, no. 2 (May 1, 2008): p 229.

<sup>328</sup> Henri is not the only person who struggles to deal with these memories. Other informants expressed similar issues and in Randall M. Packard's *Chiefship and Cosmology: An Historical Study of Political Competition* (Indiana University Press, 1981) he describes how "the intensity of feelings that still surrounds these events [of the Simba Rebellion] not only prevents my detailing them here but also hampered my attempts to solicit specific information..." p 122. He conducted fieldwork in the region in 1974.

<sup>329</sup> This was the unit description Simba warriors used. It is the French word for "squad" or "platoon."

<sup>330</sup> From the Manchester Guardian. "Congo rebel leaders sue for peace" 26 Apr 1965: pg 9. This language almost certainly

predominantly from rural agricultural families. It was “in the countryside where the armies were first recruited,” Crawford Young writes: a “conquest of the city by countryside.”<sup>331</sup>

Even in the countryside, however, support for Simba could not be assumed. Henri’s parents, for instance, did not attend the recruitment gathering. Henri’s father was a rising figure in local political circles and fled with his wife into the bush days earlier, anticipating he might be a target for violence by the Simba. They hoped their son, the lastborn of six children, would be spared due to his age. Henri was told to stay and represent the Makoba clan. They feared that if none among his family were present the Simba might engage in reprisal on their extended kin in the village. When Henri first heard the song of the Simba, his parents were thus not at his side, and instead were some fifteen kilometers from Makeke. In the emerging postcolony Henri’s father, and many rising male elites, similar to mission youth outlined in the previous chapter, invested themselves in building futures from within the bureaucracies of church, state, and business, both inherited and of their own making. The Simba song, calling for Mary to “come quickly,” evoked a sense of irruptive emergency—the Simba did not have time to waste. They sought to disrupt such plans and strategies and, in their place, cast alternative futures that were based on notions of power from the deep past. Their authority came not from respectability and education, but from a powerful medicine: *mai*.

Most people in Makeke, in Henri’s memory, acknowledged the power of the Simba’s *mai* medicine. Many villagers felt the cause of Bendela’s group was validated by the efficacy of the

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unintentionally evokes language about “hordes” of “adolescent males...gradually became the main source of manpower” for slavers like Tippu Tip in another age of eastern Congo’s history. See Melvin Page, “The Manyema Hordes of Tippu Tip: A Case Study in Social Stratification and the Slave Trade in Eastern Africa.” *The International Journal of African History* 7 n.1 (1974): 72.

<sup>331</sup> The Simba held about 2/3 of Congo’s territory by mid 1964, nearly 2.5 million square kilometers of territory.



*mai*. whatever the formal political agenda.<sup>332</sup> “Many were happy with the *mai*. They saw how powerful it was and felt they could follow it.” Others found the goals of the movement compelling: “Many joined because they believed that if they could rid the country of colonialism it would be good.” Despite the end of Belgian colonialism four years earlier, the assassination of Lumumba cast doubt on the notion of national sovereignty. Congo was seen to be enduring an imperial hangover. Leaders of the rebellion wrote in their guiding manifesto that “the essential task is actually to overturn the most retrograde structure in our nation: a submissiveness to imperialism.”<sup>333</sup>

Others, like Henri and his family, found the *mai* simultaneously powerful and frightening, and the CNL leadership’s anti-colonial rhetoric abstract and far removed from the concerns of day-to-day life in Makeke. For Henri and his kin, as well as many other villagers, the arrival of the movement was unsettling. More than any other concern, rumors of the ferocity of Simba violence was repugnant to Henri’s family and they felt that “it would be foolishness to enter.” Henri’s father saw that the arrival of the Simba would likely place their family in an impossible situation where they would experience reprisal from the Simba if Henri refused to enlist or, eventually, violence at the hands of government-aligned forces if he joined. Many families found themselves facing a similar dilemma.

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<sup>332</sup> Medicine, in this paper, is not being used interchangeably with a physical medical object—i.e. a pill or inoculation—but rather as a system of thought and practice around healing, public and personal. I use this term following its use in Steven Feierman and John M. Janzen’s edited volume with the Joint Committee on African Studies, *The Social Basis of Health and Healing in Africa* (University of California Press, 1992). Here a medicine is connected to particular enculturated itineraries and genealogies of thought and practice.

<sup>333</sup> Le programme d’action, pg 42. From CRISP 1964..

As much as the violence, one particular fact about the Simba concerned many in Makeke. The Simba were primarily children—the oldest officers in their early twenties.<sup>334</sup> Some of the warriors looked to be seven or eight years old.<sup>335</sup> On that day in July 1964 it was largely a group of boys who stood before the people of Makeke. They stood naked to their waists, clad only in shorts, armed with sticks and bows, limbs and head wrapped in leaves and grasses. Imagining their own young among these bands frightened many parents. Some hid their children, or fled with them, when the Simba held recruitment events like the one in Makeke, fearing their boys would be lost. Those that attended the events and protested openly in attempt to reason with the Simba, however, were summarily executed. “You hate our country,” Henri recalls the accusation towards those who hid or refused to volunteer their children, “So you will die.”

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This chapter is a microhistory of four years in the life of Henri Makoba: his time as a Simba. Inevitably any single source of memory provides only a fragmented and partial evidentiary base for historical narratives. Henri’s recollections are thus triangulated by, and woven together with, other forms of evidence, including archival materials, contemporaneous journalism, and other combatant’s memories of the rebellion. Gaps still remain. These are treated in this chapter as evidence as well. Henri’s focus in conversation was not always on subjects I

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<sup>334</sup> It is worth attempting a brief history of the term “child,” which seemed to emerge, in English, around the 12 century. It comes from the old English word *cild*. In essence, *cild* denoted an age of puberty. Other associations were with womb. Semantic debates emerged around whether the term carried, etymologically, a necessarily negative appellation—i.e. a description of lack or absence or “not yet.” A core debate was whether child referred to a human that couldn’t speak. This debate is traced well in Archer Taylor’s “The Semantics of ‘Child’” Archer Taylor *Modern Language Notes* Vol. 44, No. 5 (May, 1929), pp. 309-314. Another framework traced by Taylor are grouping of the term in other languages focused on pre-pubescence, suggest that child is actually pluripotent—that there are many itineraries possible for a child as opposed to an adult. Its about hope about becoming, about possibility. An early study on the semantics of the word child in English found two basic categories among a large array of etymological sources: one cluster revolved around connections to the womb and kin. The other were descriptive, with a focus on appearance: “A much more numerous and varied class, which is receiving constant additions, is composed of nouns derived from descriptive words, either adjectives or nouns with meanings lending themselves to metaphorical use,” writes Taylor. That there is a difference between a child and adult is a universal in all cultures. What the difference is, precisely, is highly contingent.

<sup>335</sup> Henri, July 9, 2015 interview, Makeke.

chose to discuss or describe. Some memories were too faded, or painful, to delve into. Undoubtedly shame and guilt shadowed his recollections as well. Acknowledging these challenges, this chapter still attempts to give weight to the subjects that anchored Henri's memories. Given the challenges of writing such a history and the presence of other source bases, why write this as a microhistory?

Though using the method differently than I do here, Nancy Rose Hunt argues for the value of such an approach. "Microhistory must bear meaning and even consequences for macrohistory. It should make us question — and unmake — the metanarratives that have been binding together our histories. A microhistory can destabilize: it should no longer be possible to tell the 'big story' in the same way again."<sup>336</sup> Henri's narrative, like all microhistories, will be necessarily "discontinuous and fragmentary," limited by memory, forgetting, affect, and self-perception, generating a story that becomes impossible to fully synthesize.<sup>337</sup> The edges and gaps in his memory resist subsumption into any 'big story' of the rebellion and the presumed omniscience such narratives require. In the case of this chapter, some of the grand narratives I seek to unseat were provided in other chapters of this dissertation. The microhistory of this chapter aims to both enrich and also "unmake" the broad threads and sweeps of history at

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<sup>336</sup> I am using Lyotard's understanding of metanarrative here: "a narrative legitimated by a particular philosophy of history" (1977).

<sup>337</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt, "Rewriting the Soul in a Flemish Congo," *Past & Present* 198, no. 1 (February 1, 2008): p 192.

multiple scales outlined in previous chapters.<sup>338</sup> In sum, the productive, generative tension of microhistory is to capture the particular but not the “exceptional.”<sup>339</sup>

More than “what happened” to Henri, the concern is also with what did not happen—the ways Henri’s story and memory evades the causal arguments previously foregrounded in this dissertation and in existing literature on the rebellion. In this way a more complex, less conceptually constricted, portrait of the rebellion, and its constituents, might emerge. It is not to suggest that adding strands to *multivocal* histories is somehow introducing greater accuracy—or authority, or authenticity—but that existing studies of the Simba rebellion are diminished by the absence of this kind of evidence.<sup>340</sup>

Methodologically, this chapter attempts to bring pieces of evidence across time, space, and genre to tell one story. The pieces at hand are plentiful but complex. Henri’s account is among a dozen other interviews with former child combatants in the Simba Rebellion I conducted during field work periods between 2009 and 2016 in eastern Congo.<sup>341</sup> While there were thousands of boys who became Simba like Henri in eastern Congo in 1964, this chapter is not concerned with using Henri’s story as a comparative case, nor is his account presented as “typical,” if such a thing could even theoretically exist. Henri’s microhistory is not a synthesis or exemplar of other combatants’ experiences to stand as a kind of universalized experience of the

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<sup>338</sup> Micro-history does not imply, here, the Carlo Ginzberg “Italian school microhistory.” Rather the in the legacy of Nancy Rose Hunt, also Joan Scott, in an attempt to perturb categories—even, or perhaps especially, ones I myself have produced in this dissertation.

<sup>339</sup> Matti Peltonen, “Clues, Margins, and Monads: The Micro-Macro Link in Historical Research,” *History and Theory* 40, no. 3 (2001): 347–59.

<sup>340</sup> Johannes Fabian, *Remembering the Present: Painting and Popular History in Zaire* (University of California Press, 1996), p 192.

<sup>341</sup> This does not include dozens of interviews with non-combatants as well that are featured here.

Simba. Instead, telling Henri's story as microhistory speaks to the irreducible contingency of a given historical actor, in a given moment, that stands against the teleologies latent in every narrative. This particular microhistory even works against my own conscious and unconscious attempts to shape the story of Henri's experience given that it ultimately a joint work, forged by Henri and myself through excavating memory, engaging in dialog, and sharing time.

Following Giovanni Levi, I understand that "microhistory as a practice is essentially based on a reduction of the scale of observation."<sup>342</sup> This chapter aims to demonstrate how reducing the scale of observation of the Simba rebellion to a single microhistory can open up analytical possibilities.<sup>343</sup> What is attempted here is what Max Weber once called complex "human situations, in *pianissimo*."<sup>344</sup> Microhistory offers, according to Levi, the chance to place against "social action" an "individual's constant negotiation, manipulation, choices and decisions in the face of normative reality which, although pervasive, nevertheless offers many possibilities for personal interpretations and freedoms."<sup>345</sup> Thus far this dissertation attempted to describe something of the "normative reality" of youth in Congo through an extended decolonization period. This chapter now explores the possibilities for evading and negotiating those normative

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<sup>342</sup> Carlo Ginzburg, John Tedeschi, and Anne C. Tedeschi, "Microhistory: Two or Three Things That I Know about It," *Critical Inquiry* 20, no. 1 (1993): 10–35.

<sup>343</sup> This produces the possibility of making legible institutions, global trends, individual lives that are either obscured or revealed depending on the scale of observation and analysis. I do not argue that microhistory is uniquely revelatory, but that is a valuable, even essential scale to include in studies of these kinds of conflict. Microhistory does not speak to capturing "voices" or providing anecdotes, but rather a proving ground for analytical approaches and arguments that emerge from engagement at other scales of observation and analysis. The scale of this chapter is not the single appropriate scale, but rather one relevant point of perspective—adding layers of insight to the broader work.

<sup>344</sup> Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (Psychology Press, 1991), p 155. I am indebted to John Brewer's essay "Microhistory and the Histories of Everyday Life," from *Cultural and Social History*, Volume 7, Issue 1, p. 87 for introducing me to this quote.

<sup>345</sup> Giovanni Levi "On Microhistory" 1991, p. 94.

conditions at the level of a single story.

Much care is required in attempting this approach. In relying heavily on a single story, even with other evidence sutured in from multiple sources, from memories recounted fifty years after the events under discussion, I acknowledge the methodological pitfalls, well charted in African history in particular, of turning biography into history. There are real risks in playing with the fraught “hermeneutics of transfiguring” a single life into many lives, and of treating oral history as an “authentic” story. I also heed Pamela Reynolds’ admonition that the emotional dangers of such histories are plethora include “the traps of sentiment, romance, and exaggeration; in writing in ignorance of faults, errors, harm done” especially for those whose lives are touched by violence—as both perpetrators and survivors.<sup>346</sup> Nonetheless the risk is worth the reward, of knowing the Simba movement at a new scale with fresh insights into the most successful rebel movement in Congo from colonization until 1996, as we shall now see.

### **Leaving/Joining**

“Enter the Simba to give us strength, to get rid of our enemies,” was the invitation from Commandant Bendela to the young men and boys of Makeke. This moment marked the

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<sup>346</sup> Pamela Reynolds, *War in Worcester: Youth and the Apartheid State* (Fordham University Press, 2013) p 128. This approach is also inspired by Pamela Reynolds work on young anti-apartheid activists in South Africa. Reynolds does not use the term “microhistory” in her work, but her focus on a small group of individual young men’s involvement in the anti-Apartheid movement does the kind of scaling work that Levi envisioned microhistory, at its best, could accomplish. That Henri Maboka was, by any definition, a child soldier makes this kind of analysis all the more vital. As Reynolds warns: “A conception of the child that has been current at certain periods among middle-class Westerners is of the child as an individual shorn of most obligations, economically dependent, politically uninvolved, emotionally and morally immature, and secure within and represented by a family. It is one that fits very few children’s experiences in the world. It may be an ideal that is worth enshrining in international legislation. It should not, in the process, undermine children’s strategies for survival, especially their economic strategies, nor obscure their actual contributions to society, nor prune their potential by constraining their options.” The texture of Henri’s experience is not, again anecdotal, it is analytically essential to understand and undue competing conceptual frames for someone like Henri.

culmination of what was essentially a public initiation ritual.<sup>347</sup> Whatever the dogma of the rebellion, Bendela's speech was not an evocation of the revolutionary spirit of Lumumba, nor was the text derived from the "guerilla manuals" authored by Mao Tse-Tung that government forces claimed they found in the pockets of dead Simba,<sup>348</sup> nor were these remarks drawn from the canon of Communist slogans uttered Pierre Mulele and his followers in Kwilu, some two thousand kilometers from Makeke. Whatever critiques of American imperialism in "Latin America, Cuba, Laos, Vietnam and Korea, etc." that the CNL leadership decried, Bendela understood that his audience were not primarily invested in Cold War politics. He knew, given experience, that they would respond best to an appeal to the "deep politics" of what John Lonsdale calls a shared "moral ethnicity."<sup>349</sup> Lonsdale argues that ethnicity is, foundationally, about unifying people around "internal discourses of social responsibility" against the kinds of othering that he calls "political tribalism." The goal of disputation and debate around social responsibility is "good governance," not by the state but through acts of reciprocity from authority figures in relationship with their constituencies. Though strangers, Bendela sought to forge community with the people of Makeke around a shared moral logic. To suggest that Bendela's appeal was in this spirit it must be clear what he meant by "our enemies."

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<sup>347</sup> That this initiation was public, and involved asking for sons, not taking children or, as is the case in some contemporary movements, forcing them to kill their own family members, indicates that this movement was intended to be socially constitutive. The impetus was on protecting the "us." For a comparative look at other initiatory practices for child soldiers in Africa since Alcinda Honwana's chapter in Alcinda Honwana and Filip De Boeck, eds., *Makers and Breakers: Children & Youth in Postcolonial Africa*. (Dakar, Senegal: CODESRIA, 2005), particularly pages 42 – 43.

<sup>348</sup> From Kikwit meeting in January 1964 in CRISP 1964, p 134.

<sup>349</sup> "Letter inedited de C. Gbenye sur la mission et l'action du CNL," 16 April 1964, from the CRISP 1964, and also Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley*, p 74.

I asked over a dozen former Simba to define the enemies of the movement. There was no consensus. Henri, and many others, suggested that the core battle was against “colonialism” and the goal was “liberation.” Another common response was that the enemies were elites and Belgian-sympathizers in the *Parti National du Progrès* (PNP), led by Moïse Tshombe. These figures were deeply hated. One informant said the goal of the Simba was “to slaughter everyone of PNP.”<sup>350</sup> At root, all enemies of the movement shared a common social sin: venality. Accusations of greed, imperialism, and foreign sympathy all spoke to concerns about elites who were egregiously extractive and selfish in how they management and shared power. Given the history of anti-elite war medicine-based movements in eastern Congo, described in chapter three of this dissertation, purging antisocial “enemies” can be seen as the core logic of the movement.

These purges were most often internally directed, focused on the “us” and not the other. To protect and renew the deep bonds of elite-common relations of reciprocity, the essential dynamic necessary to maintain the good governance, the enemies of the social “us” were those insiders who failed in their duty to “social responsibility” and abandoned their obligations to their people. *Anioto*, I argue in this dissertation, is a movement in which elites targeted dissident followers for terror and murder.<sup>351</sup> Simba, I now suggest, inverts the logic of *Anioto*: its chief targets were not disorderly women and children but corrupt elders. Elites in colonial and post-colonial Congo recognized the danger such movements posed and, to an often irrational degree,

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<sup>350</sup> Interview with Deogracias, June 9, 2015 in Mangina, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of Congo.

<sup>351</sup> Even after the brutal suppression, even erasure, of *Anioto* as described in chapter 3, it is worth noting that another male adult secret society, called *mukomo*, persisted through the present day. It is associated with *Kapipi* a spirit being described in the following way in the Kinande – English dictionary: “this is an evil spirit that terrorizes women and children. It is believed that he is a fierce young man who usually walks with a club. When he meets a woman, he tears off her clothes. He also takes with him children who are alone and that he meets in the street. *Kapipi* is one of the spirits associated to the “*mukumo*” a male secret society of which only initiated people know its internal functioning.” From Nguessimo Mutaka and Kambale Kavutirwaki, *Kinande-English/English-Kinande Dictionary* (Rutgers University: African Anaphora Project, 2008) p 464 - 465.



sought to eliminate them. Even as decolonization presented both opportunity and risk for a “nervous customary authority” class, including people just like Zakaria Kaiteni in Makeke, these figures deeply feared being purged by movements like the Simba Rebellion— should they be seen as venal, selfish, and greedy.<sup>352</sup> Simba rebels were out to “spill fratricidal blood,” even patricidal blood, over “rights to inclusion” and a place at the table in the emerging post-colonial order. Though in aggregate their goals overlap with globally-minded critiques of imperialism, when examined in specific cases it is clear that the movement was not a state-level elite versus elite *coup d’etat* type movement, but rather was being contested in the micro politics—the deep politics—of every hamlet and village in eastern Congo, places much like Makeke.<sup>353</sup>

Bendela was not attempting to change minds by orienting youths to a new politics informed by competing global political perspectives, but rather sought to call boys and young men into a novel form of belonging: to become part of the Simba “us.” Bendela’s words, again following Lonsdale, drew upon a common understanding that “youthful energy can revive a political culture corrupted by its elders.”<sup>354</sup> So with brief words and an act of “evidentiary” violence against Kaiteni, Bendela called Makeke’s young men to leverage their power to reform a broken moral order, and bring justice to unbalanced societies.<sup>355</sup> Bendela’s language of

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<sup>352</sup> This language is used in the sense that it was deployed by Neil Kodesh in *Beyond the Royal Gaze: Clanship and Public Healing in Buganda* (University of Virginia Press, 2010). He argues that “public healing” is a crucial concept in the deep political history of Africa’s Great Lakes region and that it took many forms, including armed violence. He describes the core of the concept on page 20, and then on page 119 describes the links between “public healing” and what he calls “collective violence.”

<sup>353</sup> Lonsdale and Odhiambo, *Mau Mau and Nationhood*, pp 1 and 4.

<sup>354</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>355</sup> Peterson in his unpublished work on Lost Counties disputes in Uganda. He writes “Evidentiary violence is reported, publicized, and discussed. It is fodder for petitions and demands for recompense. Evidentiary violence is the violence of victimhood: when chronicled and dramatized in reports and pleas, it helps cast political authorities as brutes. Its audience is an external organization—the state, the international community, the church, the empire—that can, by direct or indirect means, be moved to action to alleviate injustice” page 1. The claims of order and renewal that are connected to Henri’s perspective are linked but also distinct from Kanyarwanda’s animating logic of ethnic competition, drawing on registers of ethnic difference and resource scarcity to justify conflict.

inclusion and invitation were powerful. The recruitment ceremony, whatever its animating logic, succeeded. Within hours of the speech Henri and four age mates were imbricated into the *paloton*.

He does not recall a specific moment of committing to join the movement, nor making a particular oath. He was simply in. One moment Henri was a boy in Makeke, fresh from completing his primary school exams, and the next he was Simba. The rebels he joined, Henri recalled, “were all kinds of people.” He divided the group into two primary categories. One subgroup he called “*jeunesse*.” These were the youngest, least educated of the group. The others he called “students.” These had some education and political experience, who understood and could speak in the register of CNL propaganda. Most of the band were *jeunesse*. Like other Simba, neither Henri nor his peers knew, or were told, anything of the strategy of the movement, nor even where the band was headed after Makeke and for what purpose. There was no formal combat instruction of any kind. They were not armed with conventional weapons. The one weapon they were given however, according to Henri, “was so powerful.” This was a medicine with a deep genealogy in eastern Congo called *mai*.<sup>356</sup>

### **Obeying the Mai**

The *peloton* that Henri joined consisted of forty-five boys, subdivided into three *section* of fifteen young men each. These *section* were not stable fighting units. There were few defined roles and, at the ground level, no clear chain of command. Boys were constantly, and without

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<sup>356</sup> The standard Kiswahili words is “maji,” but in eastern Congolese’s dialect the “j” is not pronounced, leading to two spellings” mayi, or mai. I use the mai spelling in this dissertation. There are many worthwhile histories of other *mai* or *maji* based movements, one such is James Leonard Giblin and Jamie Monson, *Maji Maji: Lifting the Fog of War*, vol. 20 (Brill, 2010).

forewarning, moved between *sections* and into other *peloton* for no discernable reason. As a result, it was both impossible to establish specializations or internal chains of command within a *section* and, from Henri's perspective of Henri, very difficult for individual warriors to forge close friendships with comrades-at-arms—what military scholars call the social bonds of “unit cohesion.”<sup>357</sup> Whether a fellow Simba was killed or simply moved to another *section* after the chaos of battle was never clear to Henri. He only knew for certain a fellow Simba was dead if they were killed by his side. For obvious reasons, then, he did not attempt to get close to the boys in his *peloton* but sought out those from his home region who he knew before the war—regardless of which combat unit they were fighting within.

During the four years Henri was in the band “there was no training. The *dawa* was our training.”<sup>358</sup> Politics were not taught—they taught us nothing but war.” The force that produced cohesion and *esprit du corps* among the Simba was only the *mai*. The leaders of Henri's *section*, as all others, focused not on developing chains of command, tactical training, nor ideological indoctrination, but rather instilled an overweening commitment to observe the strictures of the *règlements* of the *dawa*—the rules that governed the deployment and efficacy of the *mai* medicine.<sup>359</sup> Induction, such as it was, into the *section* was achieved by articulating these rules

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<sup>357</sup> Perhaps most famously, in recent scholarship in Leonard Wong and Army War College Institute, *Why They Fight: Combat Motivation in the Iraq War*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2003.

<sup>358</sup> The use of *dawa* here is similar to how Christopher Davis-Roberts described the “*dawa ya kinchi*” or “medicine of the land” in the Tabwa speaking regions of eastern Congo. *Daw ya kinchi* is, explicitly, a tool for public healing connected directly to notions of “healing the land” Steven Feierman put forth. This particular case is discussed in Davis-Roberts' chapter in Steven Feierman, John M. Janzen, and Joint Committee on African Studies, *The Social Basis of Health and Healing in Africa* (University of California Press, 1992), on pages 376 – 392.

<sup>359</sup> In Renée Claire Fox, Willy De Craemer, and J. M. Ribeaucourt, “*The Second Independence*”: *A Case Study of the Kwilu Rebellion in the Congo* (Mouton & Co., 1965) these *reglements*, as found in Kwilu, are called “norms and rules of behavior.” They also call them “magic-accompanied norms.” They note that they found it difficult to find, among the rules those that were “explicitly communistic in nature” and rather were “magico-religious”: in nature (p 100).

and ensuring the new Simba understood and could recite them. The moment of becoming Simba was the moment when first one took the *mai*.

The *dawa* and both its associated responsibilities and empowering possibilities was, for Henri and other interlocutors, at the center of the entire Simba movement. In Henri's view it was not the commanders who ran the units: the *mai* itself governed everything, and the *mai* demanded obedience from all. Seniority, Henri remembers, "was not by age. Leadership was decided by power. Those who demonstrated the strongest *mai* power were the leaders. It didn't matter if they were the youngest person in the *section*, they would lead. We would follow them, respond to their power." Indeed, often the very youngest in the unit—Henri believed them to be seven or eight years old—were on the front lines, with nothing on their skin but the *mai*, leaves, and fronds to face down the guns of the army. They held no weapons. Henri insisted he did not see a gun in use by anyone in his band during his entire time with the Simba. That leadership was determined by *mai* power, and that this power was often linked to the youngest of the band, demonstrates the inversion of domestic authority the Simba movement embodied. All, however were subject to the authority of the *mai*. No individual, no matter how powerful, could violate the *règlements* and survive battle. Their dependence on the efficacy of the *mai* was total.

The *règlements* were clustered into four broad categories: rules around dress, ethics, foodways, and sexual contact. Combat gear for most Simba was a state of undress. "You would wear pants, but you could not wear a shirt," remembers Henri. Some of the youngest wore no clothing at all other than the wreath of a palm fronds on their heads, and leaf bracelet wrapped upon their wrists, that all Simba warriors wore into battle. The commanding officers differentiated themselves by donning generic military fatigues. The most senior among them wore leopard skin hats and a band of leopard skin as a bracelet on their left hand.

Dress differentiated and established authority but complex ways. As argued in earlier chapters, a primary continuum of power operating in this region stretches between domestic/political authority and wild power. These dress practices indexed the continuum. At one end was the domestic power of the leopard embodied in hat and bracelet. The leopard, an apex predator whose power also formed the core of *Anioto* symbolism, was long associated with the power of cleared bush—domesticated space. The leopard was master over space and, according to Vicky Van Bockhaven, the animal symbolized “local notions of leadership” in eastern Congo.<sup>360</sup> But the bareness of the youngest Simba, adorned only in *mai* and objects from the wild, demonstrated their own kind of authority—over a power bestowed by the *mai*. Their power was not bestowed by domestic elites, quite the opposite. The very absence of any technologies and objects formed by the hands of domestic experts—the focus being on the raw deployment of the *dawa* on skin—was as potent, or perhaps even more potent, than the material forms of other kinds of political hierarchy. The absence of such domestic authority figures within a *section* demonstrates that it was the *mai* itself that provided order and validated wild authority.

Simba dress practices stood in sharp contrast to the norms of respectable fashion at the time. *Évolué* sartorial regimes indexed maturity and education with suits, ties, formal dresses, spectacles and straightened, parted hair. Hygiene was to be displayed on the body’s clean surfaces and covered with crisp, laundered fabrics. The filth, nakedness, stench, and unruly hair of the Simba marked a stark, almost antithetical presentation of the powerful self. The Simba were, in their disposition and appearance, inverting symbols of postcolonial respectability, power, and prestige. These contrarian dress codes emerged through practice and observation by Simba warriors—it was not proscribed formally.

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<sup>360</sup> Vicky Van Bockhaven, “Anioto: Leopard-Men Killings and Institutional Dynamism in Northeast Congo, c. 1890–1940,” *Journal of African History* 59, no. 1 (March 2018), p 35.

Most *règlements*, however, were put into the form of declarative statements. In Henri's memory, they were as follows:

Do not steal, or you will die.

Do not break the bone of an animal.

Do not eat the head or intestines of an animal.

Do not eat vegetables, only meat.

Do not sleep with a woman.

Do not wash after you take the *mai*.

Do not physically touch another person.

While avoiding an overly instrumental, functionalist interpretation of these rules it is worth attempting to parse out some of the logic behind them, and how this might reflect something of the nature of the movement that sought to adhere to these strictures. These *règlements* were widespread—most contemporaneous sources from the 1960s as well as all of the other former combatants I spoke with recognized these rules as being clearly delineated, not the product of assumption or observation.<sup>361</sup> They can, therefore, be read as a kind of text, describing the bounds and moral positions the *dawa* was meant to enforce.

One rule concerned, broadly, the ethical foundations of Simba's relationships with non-combatants. Simba could never steal possessions while under the influence of the medicine.

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<sup>361</sup> The list, for instance, contained in Renée Claire Fox, Willy De Craemer, and J. M. Ribeaucourt, "*The Second Independence*": *A Case Study of the Kwilu Rebellion in the Congo* (Mouton & Co., 1965) on pg 100 includes the ones Henri mentioned as well as several others. These were "Partisans must live a communal life.; They must obey the orders of their chief.; They must not fight among themselves.; They must be brave, have discipline, and exhibit endurance and perseverance.; They must do whatever manual work is required, voluntarily, and look upon such work as honourable and dignifying.; They must not speak French. (Lingala is the accepted language.); They must not pray.... They must abstain from all things European." It is again important to note that these were from the Kwilu wing of the rebellion which, by all accounts, shared some aspects of the logic of the *mai* medicine while adopting a much more obvious ideological dimension to their training. Benoît Verhaegen does not mention the specific rules in his "Les Rebellions Populaires Au Congo En 1964," *Cahiers D'études Africaines* 7, no. 26 (1967): 345–59.

Though Henri and his band would later build and man informal roadblocks near the forest to demand “tolls” from passers-by, he claims neither he nor any in his section ever stole from a civilian.<sup>362</sup> The *mai* medicine would not enable personal accumulation; it was not to be abused for individual gain by those who took it. If the *mai* undergirded a purging movement against the excessive consumption of venal elites, this proscription shapes the interface point, and protects the relations of reciprocity, between a Simba band and the public it sought to protect. The Simba were only to take that which was offered to them—ensuring relations of reciprocity were observed and the young warriors could not, at least in concept, operate outside of a mandate, replete with material support, from the population.

The bulk of the *règlements* concern governance of personal consumption and bodily habits. Three addressed foodways: no breaking bones, only eating meat and no vegetables, no eating the head or intestines of an animal. In practice all three of these rules concern the relationship between a Simba and the body of animal. Simba’s normative diet was meant to be meat and not flora. Eating only meat, an expensive proposition for agriculturalists, meant either possessing wealth or living in proximity to the bush in order to access wild animals. This proscription also, then tied the Simba to the source of *mai* power: wild spaces. The proscription against breaking bones precluded butchering. Animals were meant to torn apart to be consumed, not cut, and bones not broken through chewing. The head and intestines of the animal not consumed. The knife and kitchen of the domestic world was meant to be left behind and the

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<sup>362</sup> For an interesting look at contemporary roadblock activities in eastern Congo see Johan Pottier, “Roadblock Ethnography: Negotiating Humanitarian Access in Ituri, Eastern DR Congo, 1999-2004,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 76, no. 2 (2006): 151–79.

Simba were to engage directly with the powers and provision offered by the wild spaces they inhabited.<sup>363</sup>

The proscriptions against washing and touching another person are best examined within a framework of concerns about pollution. Randall Packard, in his ethnographic account of Nande-speaking groups chiefship rituals, describes the fear of bodily pollution transferring between individuals as being at the core of tensions between the domestic (*eka*) and wild (*ekisoki*) spaces. In Packard's account much care was required to ensure that the two domains remained separate, especially during politically volatile times, such as the investiture of a new chief.<sup>364</sup> One can further see prohibitions against washing and touching being related to notions of protecting a *mai*-imbued body from contaminants that might reduce its power or inflect it with forces associated with the domestic space, potentially negating its efficacy.

The prohibition against sexual contact likely drew its logic from similar concerns about pollution and contamination between *eka* and *ekisoki* spaces and powers. As the interface between these two zones was necessary for society to thrive, Packard argues that women were the key “liminal figures” in managing the boundary—both with their social positions and their physical bodies.<sup>365</sup> It can be inferred that the prohibition against sexual contact was an attempt to avoid approaching the point of liminality in order to protect the wild powers that constituted the *mai*. If, in fact, *mai*'s efficacy can be linked to forms of social immaturity, something Henri

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<sup>363</sup> Perhaps one could link this to arguments made by Nicolas Argenti, *The Intestines of the State: Youth, Violence, and Belated Histories in the Cameroon Grassfields* (University of Chicago Press, 2007). In this text he suggests Oka call the palace the “intestines of the state,” and he addresses this connection on page 4 related to Oka-speaking groups.

<sup>364</sup> Randall M. Packard, *Chiefship and Cosmology: An Historical Study of Political Competition* (Indiana University Press, 1981).

<sup>365</sup> *Ibid.*, 43. I have written more about this in an unpublished piece called “Cosmologies of Sexual Violence” that I presented at the University of Chicago, the Hertog Global Strategy Initiative and Columbia University, and the United States Institute for Peace.



and other repeatedly articulated, then crossing the threshold of sexual experience can be, itself, connected to adulthood. This boundary-crossing potentially negated the tenets of wild power. Foreclosing access to the zones where *mai* drew its force at the expense of moving forward in the world of domestic responsibility and authority yielded dangerous—even fatal—consequences in combat.

These rules were wide reaching and very difficult to follow in all circumstances. A few were explicitly enforced by commandants within the Simba—theft was punishable by execution by a *section* leader, for instance.<sup>366</sup> Most of the rules were regulated by the *mai* itself.<sup>367</sup> If a warrior violated any rule, even if no one in the band was aware of his infraction, then *mai* would betray him in battle.<sup>368</sup> The bullets that struck his body would not turn to water, they would pierce his skin and his body would come apart—the consequences of violating the *règlements* and of failing to obey the *mai* obvious for all to see.

### **The Sense of *Mai***

Before each battle, a ceremony took place where the *mai* was “taken.”<sup>369</sup> It began, like many Simba events, with song. Some songs associated taking the *mai* with notions of birth and

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<sup>366</sup> The line between theft and appropriation was not always clear. A key source of income after the fighting was the production and manning of illegal roadblocks. Travelers were stopped and asked for a donation.

<sup>367</sup> I here use *mai* as a noun, as set of practices and concepts, but it is worth noting that others, most importantly Benoit Verhaegen, prefer to describe it in terms of “magic codes” and the medicine itself as the product of “magico-religious beliefs.”

<sup>368</sup> What, exactly, would happen in these battles? Henri never touched a firearm during his entire tenure in the Simba. How were nearly naked, unarmed children meant to defeat armed, trained, soldiers? Here Henri, and his peers I spoke with, are imprecise. We can conjecture that the encounter with Simba was both deeply frightening for opposing forces. Until faced with the mercenaries, perhaps the ANC forces could not stomach massacring unarmed children and fled rather than engage in murder. My interlocutors insist that the most powerful among them could divert—even redirect—missile and grenades fired at them so they would return to those who fired at them.

<sup>369</sup> The word “take,” *kuchukua* in Swahili, was used by all informants. They did not use the term eat, *kula*, or apply, *kuweka*.

rebirth—one popular refrain went “Even though we die, others will be born after us.”<sup>370</sup> Other songs threatened the enemies of the movement:

Jambele, ooo, mateka yetu.  
Mapombo ya Tshombe, *se cachent*  
Ya kubeba masasi.

“Hello” to our prey,  
Those babies of Tshombe, who are hiding themselves  
But should instead grab their guns<sup>371</sup>

After singing and encouraging one another’s’ appetite for battle, the Simba prepared to fight by lining up side by side before the *muganga* that was responsible for administering the *dawa*. Each band’s ritual specialist, or *muganga*, dipped a whisk of a special plant in the *dawa* and flicked the drops on the bodies of the soldiers, shouting “*mai*” with each application.<sup>372</sup> On certain occasions another type of *mai* medicine, this one a thick dark paste, was applied inside cuts made on the bodies of the warriors, usually their arms or chest. These cuts would form, at times, cicatrized markings that identified someone as a former Simba for the rest of their lives. The specific ingredients of the *mai* itself were unknown to all of my informants. Whatever it was composed of, once the *mai* was applied adherence to the *règlements* was to be absolute. For all those who took the *mai*, even those who were observant of the *règlements* its effects lasted for a limited time, and if the soldiers went too long before a battle the *mai* had to be re-applied in a similar fashion.

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<sup>370</sup> Interview with a man who asked to be identified as Yuma in Bunia on July 10, 2014.

<sup>371</sup> This is a highly idiomatic version of Lingala combined with Swahili and French. “Mateka” means “captives” in Swahili but this term was used pejoratively to imply their enemies were already under their control. “Mapombo” literally means “greens” in Swahili but is an insulting way to talk about a young person. Moïse Tshombe was the secessionist leader of Katanga blamed for Lumumba’s death.

<sup>372</sup> This process or a close variation of this was described by all informants who experienced the *mai* ceremonies. The fiction film “Nindi” about the contemporary *mai-mai* in and around Butembo depicts a very similar process.

The *mai* had a profound effect on how Henri and his peers experienced battle. “Using the *mai* medicine we were invulnerable. Even the sound of the guns was quiet. They were like the sound of breaking sticks. As the medicine was wearing off, the sound of gunfire became louder and louder until it was like normal. Then we knew they needed to flee.” Not only did the *mai* protect the body from being punctured and penetrated—it also affected the sensorium, reducing the magnitude and intensity of frightening sounds. Other states of intoxication no doubt affected perception as well. Regardless, warriors experienced the *mai*’s effects somatically, both on the body surface and within. Its influence was capable of overwhelming and sometimes inverting the natural rhythms and reactions of the body. One of Henri’s peers recalled that the *mai* provoked in him an insatiable desire to run toward the noise of guns without fear.<sup>373</sup> Henri has complex feelings about his involvement in the movement, but he is not ambivalent or skeptical whatsoever about the power of the *mai*. For Henri, even as he interprets contemporary *mai-mai* movements in eastern Congo, he focuses on the existence of “true *mai-mai*,” against the proliferating fake *mai-mai* movements that are more like bandits than healers. True *mai-mai* embody both socially protective values of the movement he was part of and are authenticated accordingly by the power of the *dawa*.<sup>374</sup>

## States of Intoxication

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<sup>373</sup> Gustave Pengeza, Mangina, June 9, 2015.

<sup>374</sup> This notion of authentication can also be tied to a Weberian sense of legitimacy. Carol MacCormack in her chapter in Steven Feierman, John M. Janzen, and the Joint Committee on African Studies, *The Social Basis of Health and Healing in Africa* (University of California Press, 1992) argues that Weberian “traditional” legitimacy is comprised of “merit, valor, and holiness” associated with a particular group. This can be linked to the notion of “charismatic” legitimacy connected to “extraordinary qualities” of power linked to particular figures (pp 429-430). MacComarck’s work linking these two notions of legitimacy is something relevant to many African healing movements is something I take up in this chapter.

The *mai* was only one among a number of substances that the Simba regularly used. Henri insisted that every Simba regularly used intoxicants. “Yes, even the children. Even us. We grew *bangi* [marijuana] there. And they made corn-alcohol. And palm wine. We drank it all the time, almost every day. It was just a part of our life there. Not just before fighting.” Henri recalls that he and all in his *section* were more or less permanently intoxicated. Purchasing alcohol was the virtually the only reason Simba sought to possess currency. The array of substances consumed by the Simba were intended to affect a warrior’s relationship with battle. The dulling effects of the *mai* were exacerbated by those of other intoxicants. It is worth noting that one substance Simba did not consume, *omuzenze*, was the traditional banana alcohol of the Kinande-speaking communities in eastern Congo. It was meant to be consumed by elders only.<sup>375</sup> The refusal to intoxicate themselves on the cheaply produced *omuzenze* can be read, perhaps, as a refusal of symbols of domestic authority and trappings of gerontocratic power.

All Simba took the *mai*, but its effects were not universal, nor of uniform potency. Particular individuals found the *mai* more efficacious than others. Some of these figures gained renown and became folk heroes among the Simba and people sympathetic to the movement in the region. I heard their names many times, spoken by nearly every former Simba I encountered. These were the ones who “demonstrated the strongest *mai* power.” Yuma Deo was the most fearsome Simba warrior in Beni territory, whose raw power established his unquestioned leadership of the band. He never wore a shirt in battle, his only weapon a wooden scepter that could be used, it was said, to strike a man dead at distance or redirect a rocket with a gesture.<sup>376</sup>

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<sup>375</sup> Interview with Kinyata Kasereka, Lwanzo, Kahindo Pierre, Vikatsira Kalalahire, Paluku Katsavu, and Kambale Kihundwa Erasto who comprised the Kighanda (elders court) of the Butembo Kinande-speaking community. In Butembo, North Kivu, DRC on April, 2014.

<sup>376</sup> One is, again, reminded of the Mwindo Epic and the role of Mwindo’s scepter in the tale.

One wonders if this can be connected to the wooden scepter Mwindo was born wielding in the epic. Yuma Deo led the entire Simba band into the city of Beni a few days after Henri's recruitment and was a key figure in the taking of Butembo, described in the previous chapter. After the Simba were repulsed from Butembo by mercenaries Yuma Deo was killed in a battle in Beni he was struck and killed by a bullet from the gun of mercenary. Even the mightiest, his former compatriots argued, failed to always observe the rules of the *mai*.

### **Discovering the Medicine**

Most warriors in a typical band, however, were not of the stature of Yuma Deo. "Most of us were just children," Henry states flatly, confirming what many other sources suggest. At this point in our conversation, he stops speaking, and stares at the broom-shaped swirls of sand between us, and then looks up. He wants to make sure I understood what he meant. "Even primary school kids were in there. Even children of eight years were in there." This memory upsets Henri. He does not, however, perceive the use of children in the Simba conflict as a result of their impressionability or ability to be coerced. A key reason for their involvement, Henri recalls, was, in part, due to the fact they were particularly suited to the forms of expertise needed to wield and produce the medicine.

The production of *mai* required the engagement of at least two key figures: *daktari* [doctors] and *muganga* [healers].<sup>377</sup> *Muganga* could be any sympathetic healer, known to the Simba, who possessed the secret knowledge of how to mix the medicine. The *muganga* were often women, though in Henri's band the healer was a man. The Simba's most important

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<sup>377</sup> It is worth noting that the children were referred to in a biomedical register—as *medicin* or *daktari*—and the elder who transformed the raw power was referred to in terms associated with traditional healers. The power had two origins—the production, and the utilization—both required purity of spirit and ability to connect with the wild.

*muganga* was named Mama Onema, a woman “with only one breast,” who was said to be the progenitor of the original *mai* that ignited the movement. Onema was said to be the bearer of the secret knowledge all *muganga* of the Simba needed to produce the *dawa*.<sup>378</sup> *Daktari* were selected quite differently. Age was not relevant, but they almost always came from among the youngest in a band. Their primary task was to harvest the raw material needed to produce the *mai* from the jungle. The wild materials, forest plants, needed were only detectable by certain people. It seemed that those with “talent” for finding them were always among the youngest in each band.<sup>379</sup> Key herbs and plants were indistinguishable from all others to most, but to the *daktari* the latent power in certain plants would be obvious. These materials may be linked to plants that Randall Packard described as ritually “cool,” used as either tools for “cleansing and purification” or “pollution and danger.”<sup>380</sup> Henri and others said that it was not the species of plant in particular that mattered, but the force latent in the plant that only a *daktari* could identify. These potent materials were then brought to the *muganga* who would then prepare the ointment and paste in a process that Henri and his peers were not allowed to witness.

## **Losing the war**

If the *mai* was overwhelmingly powerful, and Henri and his peers could testify to its efficacy personally, how does he explain why the Simba lost the war? Specifically, what happened when the Simba lost Butembo, which proved a turning point in the rebellion for Henri’s *peloton*? I

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<sup>378</sup> This information comes from a man named Mabe Sabiti, interviewed on June 10, 2014 in the city of Bunia, Ituri province, Democratic Republic of Congo. Sabiti was a commandant in another Simba band during the rebellion.

<sup>379</sup> The word used in an interview with another former child soldier was the Swahili “akili” which can also be translated as skill.

<sup>380</sup> Packard, *Chiefship*, p 36.

asked several individuals to explain the events of the battle that brought the eastern wing of the movement into months of disarray and, ultimately, annihilation.

The explanation provided by former combatants is markedly different than the one offered in the previous chapter. Rather than focusing on the superior organizational and tactical prowess of mercenary forces aligned with *Dragon Rouge*, Henri and his peers interpret the battle as a moment of gerontocratic authority winning a war of medicines against the *mai* across the main street of Butembo. According to members of the *kighanda* elders group who conducted the ceremony at the time, they were able to stop the Simba using a substance produced with a powder derived from a ram's testicles, combined with an alcohol called *mustibwe*, and other materials. The medicine derived from these ingredients emerged during a ceremony called *miereko*. The final concoction was placed on the main road bisecting the city. Such were the medicines of the elders—drawn not from the wilds but from the domesticated goat, and the banana stands that became cultural talismans in Bunande, sites to mark burial and birth.<sup>381</sup> They knew the power of the *mai* was formidable and used this negating force to block the Simba's attempt to advance through the city. A war of medicines took place in the heart of Butembo, and the elder's medicines held off the *mai* long enough for the mercenaries to deploy and drive the Simba back.<sup>382</sup>

In this framework, the critical defeat is explained by the failure of the *mai* but the triumph of another power—a different medicine. The collapse of the Simba precipitated by the emergence of medicine that validated the patriarchal elites of Butembo who protected their domestic space from an insurgency from the wild.

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<sup>381</sup> Francesco Remotti, "Catégories Sémantiques de l'éros Chez Les Wanande Du Zaïre," *L'Homme* 27, no. 103 (1987): 73–92.

<sup>382</sup> The key interview that provided this information was conducted with Mbale Kihundwa Erasto, Kinyata kasereka, Lwanzo, Kahindo Pierre, Vikatsira Kalalahire and Paluku Katsavu in the city of Butembo in July 2014.

## **Staying Alive**

For Henri, less than six months of the nearly three years he spent with the Simba were on the battlefield. While the *mai* was core to his memories of the movement, the bulk of his time among the Simba was spent hiding in the forest after the Butembo defeat. He characterizes that time by feelings of disillusionment, particularly after the powerful experiences of the *mai*: “Life was very difficult in forest. Because the conditions were very dangerous. We were just little kids. Those people gave us these great hopes—we would die for good reason. So we just went to war. But many died instead in the forest.” The forest that was their refuge and tormenter was in the territory of Wamba, northwest of Makeke.

This zone is deep rainforest, now well known as the native territory of rare okapi and pygmy chimpanzee populations. The Wamba forests lie within Equator province, northeast of the heart of the Congo basin. The immense size of the forest and the extreme difficulty of moving armed forces into the interior provided the Simba nearly limitless possibilities for evading the authorities. Their zones of moment were near enough to a principal roadway so they might access small towns where they could trade for needed goods. The time in Wamba was, in Henri’s memory, a period of deprivation with a focus on survival and escape.

Survival in the forest was not easy. The band lived by trapping animals, farming easily cultivable foods like cassava, and instituting illegal roadblocks on the road that passed near the forest and extorting travelers north and south on what is now National Route 25. The only connection to the outside world was the radio, and access to the radio was restricted to *commandant* level only. “They wanted us to keep going in the darkness,” remembers Henri. “They got the news and told us what they wanted us to know of it. They wanted to keep us in the



dark, so that the only things we knew were the trainings and ideas they wanted us to have. Not a knowledge of what was really happening in the outside world.” In the deep forest of Wamba a literal and metaphorical darkness surrounded the Simba. The crackle of the radio from the huts of leadership evoked a tenuous connection to the outside world, but nothing clear came through. Henri and his friends grew increasingly desperate to flee.

### **Escape**

It took over one year to turn a strong desire to escape into workable plan. To Henri, he faced two untenable options in the forest: “It was so dangerous. If you stayed you would die in the war. But if you fled you would be killed by Simba. Many people fled, and when found they were killed. If you made it home, though, you could be killed by the government for being in Simba.” He also recalls that he was concerned that he was too physically weak to escape. “When you were in the bush, you just found food—fruits and grasses.” Food was always scarce and insufficient. He was malnourished and constantly enervated. Given the existential dangers of both staying and escaping, Henri committed to planning his escape, but knew that “if you wanted to leave you had to have a good plan.” He and his friend from Makeke developed a strategy.

“There was one woman with us there. Everyone had to take care of themselves and keep themselves alive. It was so difficult. But we who came from Mangina [the town nearest to Makeke] began to gather together. And we would talk quietly: ‘When will we get out of here? When will we get home? What will we do?’ The plan was that when one of us was on guard, we would get the others in our plan and escape together. So one night the three of us, a friend of mine and this woman, we decided to escape.” The woman he referred to was named Kavira. She

was the “bush wife” of Henri’s *section* leader.<sup>383</sup> “She was married to this man before the war, and so when we fled to the bush near Wamba she was brought along. But this man was not good, and he began to trouble her so much during that time in the bush.” His abuse of her was well known to all in the *section*. Despite her own circumstances she was kind to Henri and his friends. “It was like we were her children in the bush. We were like a family. We were her children and she was like our mother.” Initially, however, she was not included in their escape plans. “But as me and my friend began planning to run away, she found out and began to plan to leave with us.” He remembers being concerned that involving Kavira would increase their risk, given how they imagined their *section* leader would respond: “[Having her with us] increased the danger of our plan. The anger of that guy was so strong.”

After months of planning, the team felt both ready and sufficiently desperate to attempt their escape. “We left the camp and reached the Aruwimi River, a large river that was not easy to cross. The reason we waited until March to escape is that was when the rains came with great ferocity. So the river was a low point right before the rains and we could cross it. We found a large tree that had fallen and used it to cross the river. By this point it was about 5 o’clock in the morning. Then we burned the tree we used to cross, so that if they came after us they wouldn’t have a way to cross the river.” The walk from where they were to the nearest village was a distance of about nine kilometers through dense forest. “When we arrived in the nearest town, people were so shocked to receive us. We had been starving. We were so hungry but even when we first ate some food we couldn’t eat any more. Even though we were hungry we could not eat.”

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<sup>383</sup> This term is fraught but is used in contemporary conflict analysis in Congo to describe women kidnapped and coerced into sexual relationships with battlefield commanders in militia. See a discussion of the term in Shelly Whitman, “Sexual Violence, Coltan and the Democratic Republic of Congo,” in *Natural Resources and Social Conflict*, International Political Economy Series (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2012), 128–51.

The people who received them in the village expressed sympathy for them treated them like members of their family. They provided the bedraggled group with food, promised to mislead the Simba who pursued them about where they were headed, and encouraged them along their way. “As we passed through these villages, we were hearing that our Simba were behind us, following behind. But we were far away and it would take a long time to reach us. It was something like twenty-five kilometers from where we were to Makeke again. But it happened, by luck, that one town we ended up in was where my father was doing government work. And when he saw me he wept. He really really cried completely. At that point I said, alright, I found my parents again. If the rebels find me here and I die, at least I’ve seen my parents again.” It was May, 1967, almost exactly three years after he entered the movement.

Henri does not describe in detail what it was like to be with his father again—what emotions, beyond joy, he experienced. He simply reiterated that his father accepted him back with no hesitation. They then made their way home together. Henri remembers that he was not afraid he would be rejected by the people of Makeke. “No, I wasn’t afraid at all. That was a time of joy. I wasn’t afraid to share anything with them. I felt totally open to share. They already knew what happened. It was May 28, 1967 when I finally arrived home.”

“The law was that being in the movement made you guilty of treason. And my father was a member of the government. So it was dangerous for me, and for him. We needed to go and see the *chef du poste* [CP] and inform him that I had returned.” This *chef du poste* replaced Kaiteni, who the Simba murdered. “So I had to go to the CP and do a deposition about my experience. After the deposition my parents had to ready a payment. A fine. It was 3000 Franc at the time, and then I received a government registration form. Then I was without any [legal] problems. I

was held by the government for two days. As soon as I saw my family we immediately went to the post. I was held there just for one night. Then I was released.”

### **Afterlives**

Henri’s time in with the Simba affected the rest of his life. Habits that he formed during his three years in the band were immediately challenged. Henri’s family were devout Jehovah Witnesses and insisted he relinquish a dependence on alcohol he acquired during his time as a Simba. After some months he was able to do so, but this decision limited his contact with other former Simba. Their gatherings, according to Henri, revolved around alcohol consumption and he wanted to avoid such temptations. These gatherings, though informal, were sometimes called *salama* [peace] groups. They provided an enduring space for former Simba to reflect on their shared experiences and discuss the challenges of reintegrating into society again. It was also a place where they could share and manage their fear. For decades, and for many even today, there is fear of government reprisal for fighting with the Simba. This fear is also inflected with pride: they recognize Laurent Kabila, an official in the CNL during the rebellion, as an heir to “true *mai-mai*.” Many hope they will receive recognition, and even financial remuneration, for keeping the *mai* for the 1996 generation of warriors who took the country from Mobutu—the man who eliminated the vestiges of the Simba during his rise to power.

Henry’s post-Simba life was rich and full. In 1968 he was able to return to his studies and eventually become a schoolteacher, was married and fathered children. His devotion to his faith and work, as well as his family reputation, enabled him to rise to a position of prominence in the community of Makeke. Not all his former peers experienced such a positive itinerary. Some days after my conversation with Henri in Makeke I spent time with another former Simba in a town

called Ngadi just north of Beni. Though we met before noon, the *omuzenze* was already prepared. The foamy banana alcohol brimmed an old ceramic bathtub. Long grass straws were expectantly dipped into the liquid. The tub's insides were tinted dark brown from years of service as a brew vessel.

My interlocutor was the brewer. As our conversation began it was clear he was already intoxicated from sampling his batch. Years of *omuzenze* manufacturing, his primary income source, left him, more or less, permanently drunk, or so claimed his sister, who shared his home and vocation. His name is Obed. Unlike Henri he is frail and stooped and looks much older than 67-years-old. He was a houseboy in 1964 and joined the movement in ways that are not clearly remembered. His experiences are not articulated in straightforward or linear ways. Memories are prismatic, conflicted, and contradictory. Statements and ideas fold back on themselves and his own involvement shifts and changes in each recounting. At one point he denied any involvement with the Simba. In another memory he foregrounds his role in his band and describes his heroism in detail. We meet several times and each time the details shift and shimmer. Obed's cloudy and refracted memories remind me that Henri's microhistory is not *the* microhistory of the rebellion. Other stories and experiences are buried, in clouded minds or in the soil.

## **Conclusion**

Henri's life history generates several conceptual and analytical possibilities. First it clearly establishes the centrality of children to the Simba movement, not as instrumental, easily mobilized labor but as critical agents within the functioning of the *mai* both as producers of the material and as agents of its purposes. The evidence provided by Henri allows us to view childhood in eastern Congo at this time in terms of interconnected constituencies with complex

interactions. This lens follows John Lonsdale warning to avoid “any analysis that separates power from its 'underbelly', or the thoughts and practices of dominant from 'subaltern' classes. All power relationships are represented and enacted within a polemical arena. Power may control the public address system, but crowds also have a voice, generally a murmur, at times a roar.”<sup>384</sup> This chapter centralizes the roar of children in mid 1960s eastern Congo, and shows how they became a constituency that powerfully engaged the dominant powers of the era in order to offer an alternative future itinerary for the communities of North Kivu. Theirs was a movement that excited and energized many thousands of people even as it terrorized others. Polemics can turn toward violence, and some debates exist both within and beyond the realms of discourse. But the constituency who became Simba were not “radical men of violence” who contested a certain rationalization of authority.<sup>385</sup> These were remembered as children. Henri’s story emerges from a scale shift that provides a unique vantage on what was happening at the level of the “underbelly” of society and connects with those figures most closely aligned with it.

Second, this chapter analyzes the *mai* as a medicine, not as “magico-religious belief” or “magic code.” This approach is new to studies of the Simba rebellion. By following the arc of Henri’s own memories, the chapter explored how *mai* worked and affected the bodies and minds of its adherents. It pushes down the ideological elements of the rebellion—not as irrelevant—but as of second order importance to those who joined the movement. Henri’s persistence in placing the *mai* at the heart of the rebellion drives us also to consider the importance of embodied experience. This move recalls Allen Roberts claim that “a long-standing social science bias

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<sup>384</sup> From Lonsdale’s chapter in Bruce Berman, Dickson Eyoh, and Will Kymlicka, *Ethnicity & Democracy in Africa* (J. Currey, 2004) p 78.

<sup>385</sup> *Ibid.* p 94.

against studying embodied experience cannot be denied, but it is also true that writing about movement practices presents its own challenges” and possibilities.<sup>386</sup> Where Roberts refers to the challenge of studying movement in the sense of an individual body in dance, the statement is also applicable to practices of social bodies in movement like the Simba rebels of mid-1960s eastern Congo. Whereas embodied practices might imply a realm of action beyond discourse, the *mai* medicine, its rules and powers, was both embodied and discursively constituted. Morality and discipline legitimated the *mai* both in the bounds of polemics and practice. This microhistory allowed a view into this world beyond simply a list of rules but also the memories of one person for whom the *mai* was a lived experience. It explored the dialectic between the memory of how *mai* medicine functioned in practice as well as what it meant to the public against which it was deployed.

Third, this focus on *mai* allows for the Simba Rebellion to be characterized, at least in part, as a therapeutic insurgency. This move connects the 1964 rebellion to a deep genealogy of such movements in Great Lakes Africa. This does not preclude the fact that its architects drew upon other registers of legitimacy at different scales—including Cold War and anti-imperial rhetoric. The relevance, however, of medicinal tropes within the functions of the *mai* and the relationship to such materials to notions of harming and healing the land that were politically central in pre and post-colonial communities in east and central Africa is difficult to deny.<sup>387</sup>

Examining the *règlements* of the movement demonstrates how the legitimating morality of the *mai*, predicated on forms of innocence and self-denial, by implication reproved the behaviors of

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<sup>386</sup> Allen F. Roberts, *A Dance of Assassins: Performing Early Colonial Hegemony in the Congo* (Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 2013) pg 136.

<sup>387</sup> Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals*.

immoral customary elites. Embodying the values of the *mai* was a life and death matter, both personally and to the community being targeted, and demonstrated that elites who expected support and labor from their young had much to fear from their own kin if elders transgressed their responsibilities.

Fourth, Henri's microhistory provides insights that enrich existing scholarship on this period. Benoit Verhaegen's landmark study of the rebellion, for example, reflects similar scholarship in acknowledging the key role of children in the movement without attempting to explain their disproportionate representation among the Simba. He simply acknowledges that the twelve to twenty age set was the crucial demography responsible for the bulk of violent labor for Simba movement.<sup>388</sup> His argument is that this age set was ready for mobilization primarily as they had little to gain and thus "nothing to lose" in the emerging postcolonial context.<sup>389</sup> Henri's microhistory provides a sharply contrasting argument: that these boys and their families had everything to lose for their involvement in the movement. Engaging with the Simba was a very difficult choice and some died rather than involve themselves or their children in the war. Others who joined dealt with trauma by losing themselves in intoxicants during the war and beyond. It also suggests, however, that the vision of the movement, and the medicine that animated it, was one of social renewal and not simply something to occupy time or afford opportunity.

Finally, Henri's microhistory captures a moment in the Congo Crisis era and references scales of deep time that were relevant to the Simba warriors and the constituencies they engaged. The mass mobilization of any community's children threatened the very future of the group. This particular movement promised upheaval: its architects sought to build a society where elites were

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<sup>388</sup> Benoit. Verhaegen, "Les Rebellions Populaires Au Congo en 1964," *Cahiers d'études Africaines* 7, no. 26 (1967): 356.

<sup>389</sup> Verhaegen. *Rebellions*, p 245.



accountable to their constituents and forms of political exploitation and cooption were ended. At the same time, Simba also invoked registers of meaning pulled from deep pasts. *Mai* medicinal practices drew on what E. Evans-Pritchard called “ecological time,” where temporality is imagined in cycles and rhythms centered on balance and flux, not linearity or chronology.<sup>390</sup> Ecological time is linked to the patterns and seasons of the forest and field. The *mai* medicine’s deep genealogy, and its users’ disruptive imagination of the future, made the movement an attempt to bring the future in alignment with the past. The goal was to restore order and balance, not produce a millenarian break with history and time.

We close with a question. Why did this chapter cleave so closely to a single life history? What of the other former Simba I interviewed beyond Henri and Obed? I chose not to interweave other memories and personal tales of rebellion into Henri’s story for one reason: I wanted the gaps and spaces in Henri’s tale to be preserved—to resist the temptation to fill in his memories with those of others. This was not to essentialize his story, but rather to suggest that something is revealed in the absences in Henri’s memory. Memories of actual battle, for instance, were almost totally absent from what he shared with me. How did unarmed children attack and repulse trained soldiers? He did not explain. My prodding yielded no answers. Whether Henri left the absences to protect the credibility of his memories or because of the trauma those memories evoked, I do not know. I merely note that the gaps persist and allow them to remain.

The last word in this chapter belongs to another former Simba child combatant, Paluku Mwasema. It is based on another fragment of memory. For Mwasema, like others I spoke to, the

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<sup>390</sup> I am following Carol J. Greenhouse’s interpretation of Pritchard’s concept in her, *A Moment’s Notice: Time Politics Across Cultures* (Cornell University Press, 1996), p 28.

Simba were the architects of a movement of revitalization, where the youngest brought accountability and responsibility to their elders. When the bullets struck his body it was, for Mwasema, his age and inexperience that allowed the *mai* to save him—that gave life to the power of the medicine. The worldly wisdom of his fathers was not only insufficient, it had been corrupted and in need of renewal. This was a renewal he and his young peers were prepared to institute by force. “Innocence,” he said, “made us powerful.”<sup>391</sup>

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<sup>391</sup> Interview with Paluku Mwasema, Mutwanga. April 12, 2014.

## Chapter Six: Death Talk and Martyrdom in Decolonizing Congo, 1963-1967

Death presents opportunities, perhaps even expectations, for the living to make meaning of loss. When mass death looms over a single context during a compressed period of time, as Congo in 1964, members of affected communities interpret these events in both private and public ways. “Death,” argues T. C. McCaskie, “is a social event conceived of and observed as something that happens to an individual, but only in the context of family... and community.”<sup>392</sup> This chapter tracks how three kinds of publications—the official newspaper of the Simba movement called *The Martyr*, books within a genre of Protestant missionary “Congo martyrs” literature, and the Catholic magazine *Africa Alive*—used deaths connected with the Simba rebellion to constitute different types of community. It examines how people with disparate, even antithetical, political perspectives debated the social meaning and politics of same kinds of death during and after the movement.

Stephanie Newell suggests that “printed representations of dead people help to highlight the ways in which bodies can be produced through genre, narrative perspective, language, and style.”<sup>393</sup> The “bodies” found in this chapter, individual and social, living and dead, shared experiences of violence committed by and against Simba rebels in the mid 1960s. Impassioned authors used the end of life as the grist for creative pieces on the politics of dying. All sought to

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<sup>392</sup> T.C. McCaskie, “Reading, Writing, and Printing Death: Obituaries and Commemoration in Asante,” in Karin Barber, *Africa’s Hidden Histories: Everyday Literacy And Making the Self* (Indiana University Press, 2006) p 342.

<sup>393</sup> Stephanie Newell, “From Corpse to Corpus: The Printing of Death in Colonial West Africa,” in *African Print Cultures*, ed. Derek Peterson, Stephanie Newell, and Emma Hunter (The University of Michigan Press, 2016), p. 390.

shape communities around their imagination of loss. Creative writers contested one another's interpretations of death. What emerged were polyvalent perspectives on the relationship between time, mortality, and morality. One thread links their intellectual production: the question of martyrdom. Who were the martyrs among the dead? What were the political, social, and religious implications of ultimate personal sacrifice for those that remained?

Temporal imaginations about past and future saturated how Simba leaders, global Catholics, mourning mothers, and American protestants interpreted the human aftermath of the violence of 1964. This chapter tracks how core themes of these martyrdom debates persisted long after the rebellion within a larger field of preponderant "death talk" that continues to provide a rich lexicon for political disputation in Congo today.

### ***The Martyr***

On July 21, 1964, the Simba Rebellion's political wing, *le Comité National de la Libération - Section de l'Est* (CNL-SE), launched a biweekly newspaper: *The Martyr*.<sup>394</sup> The publication was the official intellectual "combat organ" of the movement with the motto "Fatherland or death" on the masthead.<sup>395</sup> In bold letters the editor was listed as Gaston Soumialot. Soumialot was the chief architect of the political wing of the Simba Rebellion. At the time he published *The Martyr* he also served as President of CNL-SE and was the Minister of Defense in his own government.<sup>396</sup> Soumialot's consolidation of power—personally overseeing the governance,

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<sup>394</sup> CRISP 1964 p 115 from L This fact can also be deduced that the biweekly the 15<sup>th</sup> of November was the 17<sup>th</sup> issue. Meaning the first issue was, likely, printed July 21.

<sup>395</sup> In French it is "La patrie ou mort."

<sup>396</sup> His vice president was Laurent Kabila, the future president of Congo. At the time he was in charge of External Relations and External Commerce. See CRISP page 225.

communications, and military functions of the rebellion—came after a rapid rise through the ranks of revolutionary movements in eastern Congo after the death of Lumumba. After proving his capacity under other leaders, on January 1, 1964, when he was forty-two-years-old, Soumialot took command of CNL affairs in eastern Congo.<sup>397</sup> He described himself as the “new Lumumba” and his rhetoric tended to be more florid, vivid, and apocalyptic than his compatriots.<sup>398</sup> During the ascendant months of the rebellion Soumialot used the *The Martyr* to influence public perception of the Simba Rebellion and outline the movement’s ambitions and aspirations.

The audience for the paper is not clear. The editors of *The Martyr* claimed to serve 13,000 subscribers in Congo, 7,000 in Belgium, and 10,000 in “other” regions. It is not certain if the actual audience was as large as the publication claimed, but there was certainly a significant potential reading public within newly independent Congo. The early adoption of development paradigms in post-WWII Belgian Congo yielded a surge in adult literacy rates in the late colonial era.<sup>399</sup> By 1960 over half of the adult population of Congo were literate—the highest percentage in Africa.<sup>400</sup> That said, given the demography of the rebels themselves, it seems clear the intended audience of *The Martyr* were neither foot soldiers nor members of the communities from which the Simba emerged. Given the ages of most soldiers, their rural origins, and the high

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<sup>397</sup> Soumialot died on February 11, 2007. His obituary can be found in the February 14, 2007 edition of the newspaper *L’Avenir*. He was born in 1922 in a Kikusu-speaking community.

<sup>398</sup> The Economist Intelligence Unit, “Quarterly Economic Review: Congo Rwanda Burundi,” No. 7, October 1964, p 2.

<sup>399</sup> Bas De Roo, “Colonial Taxation in Africa. A Fiscal History of the Congo through the Lens of Customs (1886-1914),” *Afrika Focus* 30, no. 2 (February 1, 2018). See also Leigh Gardner’s unpublished “The Fiscal History of the Belgian Congo in Comparative Perspective.”

<sup>400</sup> Fall, Bernard, “Education in the Republic of Congo” in Peter Duignan and Lewis H. Gann, *Burden of Empire: An Appraisal of Western Colonialism in Africa South of the Sahara* (Hoover Press, 2013).

price of the paper, 10 francs, very few soldiers likely read or even could access the periodical. *The Martyr* was not written for the masses. Instead it functioned as a tool to engage emerging forces within the global Left, as well as to inspire sympathy for the rebellion among Congo's urban *évolué*. Its primary posture was global: it reached, by its own reports, a wider audience outside Congo than within.

Coming off the presses in tabloid sheets from an office on Lippens Avenue in what is now Kisangani, the paper maintained a post office box and phone line for facilitating engagement with its reading public. Even so, the editors rarely took the opportunity for dialog. Foundationally *The Martyr* was a platform for revolutionary monologue. The newsprint was crammed with dense text. There were few images. Much of the content could be described as propagandistic bombast, threatening enemies of the movement and celebrating real or perceived victories. From its pages the authors vehemently decried the existential threats of “atomic imperialism,” bemoaned that the Catholic church was “owned” by Belgian forces and threatened dire violence on the movements many enemies. One, likely unintended, audience of *The Martyr* were Belgian officials. After Belgium facilitated a massive assault against the Simba that turned the tide against the rebellion, Foreign Minister Paul-Henri Spaak attempted “to legitimise the decision to intervene by referring to the rebel paper” and its vivid threats against Europeans in Congo.<sup>401</sup>

### **Marxist Martyrdom**

The content of *The Martyr's* revolutionary monologues did not reflect orthodox socialist discourse at the time. That the “combat organ” of a nominally leftist insurgency would be called

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<sup>401</sup> Ludo De Witte, “The Suppression of the Congo Rebellions and the Rise of Mobutu, 1963–5,” *The International History Review* 39, no. 1 (January 1, 2017): 107–25, p 117.

*The Martyr* was itself not an obvious choice. In crafting the CNL's message, Soumialot mixed vivid religious rhetoric with Cold War nightmares of events like nuclear war annihilating all life in Congo.<sup>402</sup> The tone was rarely ideologically doctrinaire, and instead was prone to conspiracies drenched in Christian allegory. In private correspondence among senior leadership the rebellion was described as "a holy war."<sup>403</sup> Language of unconditional faith and religious sacrifice permeated the movement.

Communication targeted directly toward the Simba was even more overtly religiously inflected. Rather than supplying Simba with copies of *The Martyr*, the CNL leadership produced what they called the "Revolutionary's Catechism" to be circulated among the rank and file. It featured, on the cover, a photo titled "Patrice Emery Lumumba: Martyr for National Independence."<sup>404</sup> In the text Lumumba was described as an "eternal martyr for our people and all colonized peoples."<sup>405</sup> The "Revolutionary's Catechism" replicated the dialogic format of Roman Catholic catechisms. A sample question: "What is the purpose of Lumumbaism?" Answer: "An African fatherland or death." The didactic idioms of religious devotion and ultimate self-sacrifice came to inhabit the ideological center of the Simba movement for its leaders, even as the logic of the *mai* medicine, with radically different practices and meanings came to impel the actions of soldiers in the field.

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<sup>402</sup> CRISP "Congo 1964," Princeton University Press, 1966, p 187.

<sup>403</sup> Foreign Ministry Archives Belgium, AIMO date: August 8, 1964, Fiches 18287(1) : "Troubles au Congo" Correspondance Années 1964-1965, Dossier Monsieur Gbenye, "Troubles vol 4", File: "Correspondence.

<sup>404</sup> "Catéchisme du révolutionnaire par MNC-Lumumba" CRISP, p. 66

<sup>405</sup> Benoît. Verhaegen, CRISP "Congo 1964," *Princeton University Press*, 1966, <http://press.princeton.edu/titles/1008.html>. p 467.

As the prospect of victory dimmed, and the tides of battle turned against the Simba, death in the rebellion—martyrdom for the “fatherland”—became the remaining guiding ambition for leaders of the movement. They were to serve as an inspiration for future revolutionaries. Soumialot did not call Simba to die for Lumumba, but rather *as* Lumumba did, as an ultimate act of service to the nation. This approach reflected broader trends in Congolese popular culture as Lumumba’s political beatification generated a rich and vivid iconography around his visage.<sup>406</sup> Bogumil Jewsiewicki traces how sacralized iconography of Lumumba sought to bridge the divide between “sacred history and political history” through depictions like Lumumba enduring a “secular crucifixion.”<sup>407</sup>

Beyond Congo the trope of Lumumba as martyr was discussed in halls of power throughout the world. Halpli Bundle, the United Nations Undersecretary for Political Affairs, declared in a speech in the United States in 1961 that the manner of Lumumba’s death “makes him a martyr.”<sup>408</sup> From UN officials to field commanders in the Simba Rebellion the notion of dying for the cause—martyrdom—was a core, if contested, concept. Though aware of Lumumba and proud of their association with him, on the ground warriors in the Simba Rebellion were immersed in a quite different kind of apocalyptic nationalism tied to notions of ecological time.

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<sup>406</sup> Bogumil Jewsiewicki, Flory-Kante Mbuyamba, and Marie Daniella Mwadi wa Ngombu, “Du témoignage à l’histoire, des victimes au martyrs : la naissance de la démocratie à Kinshasa,” *Cahiers d’études africaines* 35, no. 137 (1995): 209–35. See also Isabelle de Rezende’s dissertation, “Visuality and Colonialism in the Congo: From the “Arab War” to Patrice Lumumba, 1880s to 1961,” defended in 2012. There is a fascinating section on Lumumba’s bones functioning as holy reliquary for various people in contemporary DRC on page 399.

<sup>407</sup> Bogumil Jewsiewicki, “Corps Interdits. La Représentation Christique de Lumumba Comme Rédempteur Du Peuple Zaïrois (Forbidden Bodies: Lumumba Christly Image as Redeemer of the People of Zaire),” *Cahiers d’Études Africaines* 36, no. 141/142 (1996): 113–42; Jewsiewicki, Mbuyamba, and Ngombu, “Du témoignage à l’histoire, des victimes au martyrs.”

<sup>408</sup> These comments were made in a speech at Stanford University. They are recounted in the *Stanford Daily*, Volume 139, Issue 9, 16 Feb 1961.



*The Martyr's* editorial team worked to communicate the ferocious commitment of the Simba to their cause. As the rebellion lost ground the intensity of this rhetoric escalated. One article warned of the costs of foreign intervention against the Simba. Ideology again lost ground to more visceral imagery: "We fabricate our fetishes with the hearts of Belgians and Americans, and we wear the skin of Belgians and Americans as our clothing" wrote *The Martyrs* editors.<sup>409</sup> Again and again, *The Martyr* linked both killing and dying to a single cause, the advancement of the movement's increasingly diffuse and incoherent ideals. Death and dying itself, it seemed, became the final purpose of the rebellion.

Fundamentally, Soumialot wrote into being a temporal loop in which the sacrifice of the prototypical martyr (Lumumba) summoned new martyrs (the Simba) into being. Increasingly the movement's purpose was generating a cycle of warriors being born to kill and die. The shared blood of Lumumba and his followers was meant to renew and revive the political fortunes of the Congolese. The necropolitics of *The Martyr* revolved around a temporally and politically indeterminate total victory against imperialism, injustice, and humiliation.

As the seeds of the Simba rebellion were being stirred in Congo's Kwilu province in 1963, Carl Schmitt wrote about the efflorescence of a particular kind of warrior in the Cold War period, a unique form of partisan. He argued that these partisans emerged in two kinds of conflict: civil war and anticolonial struggle:

"...when war is conducted as in civil war as a class struggle or when its main goal is the elimination of the government of the enemy state, then the criminalizing of the enemy represents a revolutionary blast that works in such a way as to make the partisan the real hero of the war... Such is the logic of a war of *justa causa* [just cause] in the absence of

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<sup>409</sup> Gaston Soumialot, "Le Chef de l'Etat S.E. Christophe Gbenye Delcare," *Le Martyr*, November 14, 1964, No. 17, p 1.

recognition of a *justa hostis* [just enemy]. The revolutionary partisan becomes the central figure of war in such cases.”<sup>410</sup>

*The Martyr* positioned itself within this framework. To valorize the Simba as “central figures” and “real heroes” of the war, Soumialot rejected the presences of a “just enemy” in Congo. He sought to make the war about global ideology, not control over a legitimate state entity. Within logic propounded by *The Martyr*, the Simba Rebellion was cast simultaneously as civil and imperial war—a battle against the collusion of unjust foreign and domestic enemies. Soumialot’s rhetoric called for a third element to be added to Schmitt’s analysis. Just cause in the absence of a just enemy called for *justa mortis* [just death]. *Justa mortis* grounded the conceptual architecture of Simba martyrdom propounded in the world of thought that *The Martyr*’s discourse helped fashion.

Did those who actually did the dying in the conflict, the Simba warriors themselves, share the notions propounded by CNL leadership around their sacrifice? This is, again, difficult to establish, but it seems clear that these views did not find their way into the interpretive frameworks of average soldiers. None of my interlocutors who fought in the rebellion recall encountering a copy of *The Martyr* at any point during their enlistment period. Quite the opposite: national news, even coming from leadership within the movement was deliberately kept out of earshot for most Simba. None recalled studying or even hearing about the “Revolutionary’s Catechism.” Precluded by poor internal logistics or deliberate intention from formal conversation about core ideological concerns, might the Simba warriors have resonated with the martyrdom framework espoused by CNL leadership? It seems unlikely.

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<sup>410</sup> Carl Schmitt, *Theory of the Partisan: Intermediate Commentary on the Concept of the Political* (Telos Press Pub., 2007) p 21.

While the figure of Lumumba was massively influential and inspirational to the former Simba I interviewed, none suggested they fought for Lumumba, but rather against the corruption of elites. While Soumialot imagined Cold War enemies readying nuclear weaponry against the Simba, the warriors themselves rallied against more tangible targets of morally compromised headmen, priests, and business elites. The apocalyptic temporality propounded by Soumialot gave way on the battle field to a quite different cry: “Even as we die, more of us will be born.”<sup>411</sup> The temporality invoked in this war chant did not begin with Lumumba, it implied a deeper cycle. Death was not aspirational, it was inevitable. Individual purpose was irrelevant. As a group, a cadre of *mai* warriors, they were imbued with a power beyond linear time that could not be stopped by an individual death. Though they died they would live. The *mai* would endure.

### **Refusing Martyrdom: Denying Good Death in “Africa Alive”**

For six months in 1964 *The Martyr* and the Catholic magazine *Africa Alive* were in circulation at the same time. Publications devoted to righteous death and celebrating new life competed for audiences in Congo and beyond. Despite its title *Africa Alive* spent two years addressing the loss of Catholic lives during the rebellion. It featured, among analysis and words of encouragement, a poem of intense lament from the Catholic laity affected by the violence. The authors, like most Catholics in Congo, were profoundly affected by the violence of 1964. The church estimated the

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<sup>411</sup> Interview with Henri Makoba, June 9, 2015, Makeke, North Kivu, Congo.

deaths of Congolese church workers to be “in the thousands.”<sup>412</sup> Untold numbers of congregants perished. More than 1.2 million Catholics were, at some point, under Simba occupation.<sup>413</sup>

In the June 1965 issue the magazine’s first page was starkly black. Bold white lettering pierced the dark backdrop. The statement recorded was called the “Congolese Mothers Manifesto”:

*“Mamans du Congo, c’est une grosse palabre!  
Nous, le mamans, nous pleurons nos enfants qui sont morts pour rien;  
Nous, les mamans, nous pleurons nos maris que nous ont abandonnés avec la lourde  
charge d’éduquer toute seules les enfants qui nous restent...  
Nous voulons la paix, la paix, la paix!”*

Mothers of Congo, there is too much idle talk!  
We, mothers, weep for our children who died for nothing,  
We, mothers, weep for our husbands who abandoned us  
with the heavy burden to educate all the children who remain ...  
We want, peace, peace, peace!

The authors of this poem offered a radical rejoinder to the partisans of *The Martyr*, and the Simba themselves. They refused to find signs of political possibility and renewal in the death wrought by the rebellion. The unnamed mothers in the poem condemned the progenitors of “idle talk”—the productive, generative discourses of martyrdom rife at the time. They refused to cast their lost children as political heroes, medicinal warriors, or religious victims. Instead, they argued that the profusions of death accomplished “nothing.”

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<sup>412</sup> “Eglise Du Congo: Liste Des Victimes de Janvier 1964 a Fin Mars 1965,” *Vivante Afrique: Revue Générale Des Missions d’Afrique*, June 1965.

<sup>413</sup> “Malgré Les Ruines, l’Eglise Du Congo Garde Confiance...,” *Vivante Afrique: Revue Générale Des Missions d’Afrique*, June 1965. Among church leadership, 116 were killed, 109 of whom were expatriates. Given the proportion of Catholics to Protestants in Congo the ratio of leaders killed was significantly higher among Protestants than Catholics. Only one American Catholic church worker was killed, compared with dozens of American Protestants dead at the hands of Simba.

These women argued that the violence of 1964 resulted in only empty, meaningless, loss. They ignored notions of martyrdom that required death to produce meaning. These women reminded the readers of *Africa Alive* that loss begets responsibility. Their words shifted the focus from those who died onto the living remnant who would bear the enduring, unceasing burdens of absence. Their “manifesto” was a redirection of the necropolitical. Their words sought to move debate towards the bounds of obligations of those who remained. Against the notion of ultimate victory through death implicit in the concept of the martyr, these mothers used the platform provided by *Africa Alive* to ensure the living remembered their obligations and relations of reciprocity in kin and church community.<sup>414</sup> They were not interested in valorizing the dead but enlisting the support of the living.

What is perhaps most radical about the manifesto is not what the public was asked to remember but rather what the reading audience was being allowed to forget. No names of the dead were referenced, no obituaries shared. No details were provided to mark the lives of the fallen. The dead were lost “for nothing,” the texture of their lives obliterated—effaced by the refusal to make meaning of their passing. The mothers also rejected temporal loops of death and rebirth the Simba imagined. The movement meant nothing to these women, death marked a full stop, not a new beginning.

The perspectives on death printed in *Africa Alive* were polyvalent. Many Catholic constituencies suffered. The editors of *Africa Alive* wrote that “the insurrection of 1964-1965 brutally jolted and shook” the church corporately.<sup>415</sup> Given that Catholics were responsible for

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<sup>414</sup> The “Congo Mothers” spoke in ways similar to the dozens of people affected by the rebellion I talked with in eastern Congo between 2012 and 2016. Very rarely did the term “martyr” appear in conversations, and when mentioned it referred exclusively to Lumumba. There are obvious links here as well to the kinds of social obligation demanded by figures in the Mwindo Epic discussed in chapter one.

<sup>415</sup> *Ibid.*, p 16.

virtually all primary and secondary instruction in Congo, educating over 1.5 million of the 2 million school-aged children in the country, a particular concern was the fact that “a considerable number of young people, between ages 8 and 15, were conscripted into the rebellion.”<sup>416</sup> Church children became Simba in large numbers. Though noted, the writers of *Africa Alive* made no attempt to understand why this would be the case. Rather, they too engaged in their own form of lament. They described the Catholic church in Congo as being “in torment.”

Lament, however, was not the only interpretive register of 1964’s violence featured in the pages of the magazine. Pope Paul IV published a statement in *Africa Alive* that sought to reframe the deaths of Catholic workers in Congo in the familiar register of martyrdom. He did not explicitly name any of the victims a martyr—this status could only be officially conferred after significant bureaucratic processes at the Vatican. Nonetheless he sought to inspire the Catholic laity with the recent canonization of the Uganda Martyrs, and honored those serving in Congo for being the “irreplaceable artisans of the arduous and sublime task for which you have consecrated your life.” Rather than attempt to explain the reasons for the brutality meted out against the Catholic community the Pope stated simply that “the violence was unbound, and alas, blood flowed.”

The Pope and others in *Africa Alive* sought to locate stories of hope and inspiration amidst the violence. “Despite ruin, the Congolese church keeps the faith” one article was entitled.<sup>417</sup> The authors described tremendous sacrifice and commitment among Catholics and claimed that from the ashes “more authentic Christian life was blooming” in Congo. The Simba Rebellion, in this view, was a crucible for demonstrating commitment—it served as a test of

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<sup>416</sup>Ibid., p 17.

<sup>417</sup> Ibid.

spiritual authenticity. In ways strikingly similar to Soumialot's framings in *The Martyr*, some of the polyvocal perspectives in *Africa Alive* inferred that the power of the Catholic cause in Congo was validated by virtue of individuals' willingness to die for it. While acknowledging the killings, even describing the "massacre of Christians," the editors also carefully avoided naming any individuals "martyrs." Indeed, the register of martyrdom among Catholic officials was more carefully deployed than it was by Protestants in the martyrdom biographies or the Simba leadership. Nonetheless, the spirit of martyrdom discourse was rife throughout the pages of *Africa Alive*. Stories of comparative persecution and the resilience of the church filled the reflective post-Simba issues. Such framings were enduring. Two Catholics killed by Simba are now beatified: Father Francesco Spoto and Sister Marie-Clémentine Anuarite Nengapeta: who also became the "first Bantu" to be beatified by the Catholic church.<sup>418</sup>

In the end *Africa Alive*'s editors could not embrace the radical rejection of martyrdom discourse that "Congolese mothers" called for. They did however follow them in a turn toward lament, acknowledging the incomprehensible costs of Simba violence. They looked, however, in two directions at once: toward the future and the past. 1964 itself was largely unaddressed—almost ignored. The spectacle seemed too great to confront. The violence was instead placed within a deep temporal framework of the history of the advance of the gospel throughout time and into a teleological future of the coming Kingdom of God.

In the immediate, terrestrial future, however, the authors focused on strategies of transformation for Congo's coming generations. They sought to prevent another violent

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<sup>418</sup> Nengepeta's martyrdom narrative, according to [catholicsaints.info](http://catholicsaints.info) and the University of Notre Dame's [faith.nd.edu](http://faith.nd.edu) site, was due to her refusal to submit to rape by the Simba Commander Colonel Pierre Olembe. After she was shot and stabbed she reportedly uttered, according to Pierre Olembe: "I forgive you because you know not what you do"—a phrase common in martyr tales.

mobilization of Catholic youth. Where education seemed to have failed to prevent radicalization in the late colonial era, the authors cast about for ways of avoiding future instability. To evade the pitfalls of the past, a new vision was called for in *Africa Alive*. It was time, it argued, for the church to foster “socio-economic development in rural zones” of the Congo.<sup>419</sup> The protagonists in Congo’s future, according to the Catholic Church, would be prosperous farming families. The avenue toward growth and stability was to come through the pocketbook and not just the textbook. The Simba rebellion was framed as the product of economic desperation. Thus, it was to be the gospel of development that could chart a way forward. From the ashes of death came a new imagined engine of progress.

In the end the words of the “Congolese mothers” remained unanswered by the editors of *Africa Alive*. For all the lament, hope and possibility summoned up in the magazine, the emptiness, loss, and brokenness of the poem persists. Trusting in development, keeping the faith, and anticipating veneration were cold comfort for mothers whose husbands and sons were gone forever.

### **Protestant missions and *a priori* martyrdom**

The ambivalent, technocratic, and forward-looking approaches to making meaning from death recorded in Catholic periodicals found a strident rejoinder in the intense memorialization activities of American protestants in the wake of the rebellion. *Life Magazine*, in its December 4, 1964 issue, ran the words “Congo Martyr” over a cover image of an American medical doctor

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<sup>419</sup> “Comment Sauver l’écolier Congolais?,” *Vivant Afrique: Revue Générale Des Missions d’Afrique*, October 1965.



and missionary named Paul Carlson. Carlson became a *cause célèbre* in the United States after he was killed by Simba in Kisangani in November, 1964.<sup>420</sup>

On the *Life Magazine* cover Carlson looks jovial, surrounded by Africans, holding hands with a child. He wears khaki shorts and polo shirt. He appears both of and outside of the group. The depiction of the missionary doctor evokes contemporaneously produced oil paintings of Christ among children. The cover image and narrative behind it was managed Henri Luce, the publisher of *Life Magazine* and the child of Protestant missionaries. Luce grew up in China. His family were present when partisans of the Yihetuan Movement killed about 200 American missionaries. Henry Luce, though committed to his faith, sought to present American missionaries like Carlson as martyrs in Congo for more than just the gospel.<sup>421</sup> They were Cold Warriors as well as Christian soldiers. Luce saw figures like Carlson as “bulwarks of Christian democracy” and their death a sacrifice for both faith and polis.<sup>422</sup> From different, even mirrored ideological perspectives, both Luce and Gaston Soumialot drew on a similarly mix of religious fervor and Cold War ideologies to shape their views. Both sides saw the conflict as foundationally a “holy war,” but imagined the sacred and the profane in radically different, profoundly antagonistic ways.

*Life Magazine*'s Carlson cover was only one item in a voluminous genre of Protestant “death talk” which emerged after the events of 1964. Missions to Congo was long linked, in the Protestant imaginary, to death. Missionaries were apocryphally said to have literally packed their

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<sup>420</sup> “Congo Martyr: Photographs, Eyewitness Reports of the Massacre,” *Life Magazine*, December 4, 1964.

<sup>421</sup> Robert E. Herzstein, *Henry R. Luce, Time, and the American Crusade in Asia* (Cambridge University Press, 2005). Approximately 200 missionaries died in the movement, also called the Boxer Rebellion, similar to the number who died in Congo in 1964.

<sup>422</sup> Herzstein, *Luce*, p 114.

possessions bound for Congo in their future coffins.<sup>423</sup> Yet in 1964 some did lose their lives. At least 159 expatriate missionaries were killed by Simba between June and December.<sup>424</sup> The most heavily affected Protestant mission agency, the Unevangelized Fields Mission (UFM), lost nineteen of their missionaries, including six children.<sup>425</sup> Among these was a man named J W Tucker.

J W “Jay” Tucker,<sup>426</sup> became subject of a posthumous biography, *He is in Heaven*, penned by his wife. The text is emblematic of a genre of literature around missionary death that emerged after 1964 and provides a view on the kind of death discourses that animated a confluence of Protestant theology and Cold War politics in the mid-1960s.<sup>427</sup> Jay’s story well captures the themes of the genre.

While a teenager in Alabama, J W felt he was called by God to go to Congo. He reportedly told his family that “Without ever having seen the land, I love it. I want to live there and I want to die there and be buried there.”<sup>428</sup> Like the leaders of the Simba Rebellion,

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<sup>423</sup> This claim was repeated in multiple interviews in Congo, and I found one source of this claim in a book on Christian Missions by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor . . . and Yourself* (Moody Publishers, 2014).

<sup>424</sup> J. Anthony Lukas, “Death of 30 More in Congo Feared,” *The New York Times*, December 21, 1964.

<sup>425</sup> McMillan, “1964 Remembered: The Congo Simba Rebellion, Then and Now.” A history of UFM involvement in eastern Cong is briefly sketched in the previous chapter.

<sup>426</sup> The letters “J W” constituted his first name. They were not placeholder initials for longer names. He seems to have used the name “Jay” in practice.

<sup>427</sup> One prototypical account is by Homer E Dowdy, who also sought to frame the death of missionaries as martyrdom. Dowdy’s work on the period, *Out of the Jaws of the Lion*, is something like a true crime tale—meant to be both exotic and edifying. The jacket identifies it as a “blood-drenched saga” throughout which “the reader will marvel at the continuing miracle of faith.” The book is dedicated “To the loved ones of the Congo Martyrs, from whose deaths will surely spring forth much new life.” A freelance writer affiliated with the Unevangelized Fields Mission, Dowdy, rushed to Congo as the Simba were taking the northeast in November, 1964 and claims to have had the “proud yet humbling experience” of being the “only writer” on Dr. Paul Carlons “last, lonely journey to the Ubangi.” Simba rebels, “supercharged by the taste of blood” were spreading destruction.

<sup>428</sup> Angeline Tucker, *He Is in Heaven* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), p 22.

martyrdom was not just a possible consequence of Tucker's commitments, it was ultimately the telos of the work. It signified total commitment.

Years later, while fulfilling his dream to serve in Congo, Tucker met a single American missionary named Angeline in Watsa, northeastern Congo. United by their common fervor for missions in central Africa, they married. Whatever Henry Luce and the CNL leadership may have believed, for Angeline Tucker missions was utterly apolitical. "Missionaries everywhere are prohibited from talking politics with the natives of the country in which they serve, and we were no exception." She claims that for the nearly twenty years the Tuckers lived in Congo the subject of politics, and particularly independence, simply "never arose."<sup>429</sup> "We had heard no talk of independence up to the time we left for our 1958 furlough. As far as we could judge, the people of northeast Congo were perfectly satisfied with the status quo... The leaders [in the cities] may have thought about it, but the community was in the process of transformation from a town to a city, and politics was then, I'm sure, a secondary consideration. Everyone was too busy with his own affairs."<sup>430</sup>

Lumumba's rhetoric was thus startling to the Tuckers. If the authors of *The Martyr* beatified Lumumba, missionaries demonized him. Jay suggested to his wife that "Lumumba might well be the most dangerous man in Africa."<sup>431</sup> They reported that Lumumba's MNC activists tricked naïve villagers into joining his party by promising they could "take [a party registration] card to any mission and you will be baptized. All you have to do is show it."<sup>432</sup>

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<sup>429</sup> Tucker, *He is in Heaven*, p 100.

<sup>430</sup> Tucker, *He is in Heaven*, p 100.

<sup>431</sup> Tucker, *He is in Heaven*, p 101.

<sup>432</sup> Tucker, *He is in Heaven*, p 104.

Angeline was convinced the rebels enjoyed no popular support outside of cities, and certainly not in Paulis (now Isiro) where they lived. Nonetheless, on August 19, 1964 the Simba came for the Tuckers.

The American family was bewildered by the Simba. Particularly perplexing were the *règlements*, described in the previous chapter: the dress and eating codes, the refusal of the Simba to steal or make any physical contact with anyone outside the movement. “The strictest vow was the one about not touching women,” Angeline wrote. Nor would they eat food prepared by a woman. It seemed to Angeline that all “vegetables were taboo.”<sup>433</sup> She explained that the *dawa* was likely a narcotic substance: “When it took effect it could drive a man crazy, giving him an almost uncontrollable urge to kill and a conviction that if he followed instructions nothing could kill him.”<sup>434</sup> According to the Tuckers, Simba units consisted of bands of “little boys.” Under house arrest, their jailors were “two dirty, ragged little simbas [sic] named Motuba and Ngonde... Motuba was eleven and Ngonde twelve.”<sup>435</sup> When the Simba took Jay into detention, Angeline expressed shock that the commandant was “not much older than Johnny,” their fifteen-year-old son. At the time Jay was taken, there were no reports of whites being killed, but the Simba were decimating local elites, killing the governor of Uele province, among others, and Congolese Catholic priests.<sup>436</sup>

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<sup>433</sup> Tucker, *He is in Heaven*, p 118. Angeline also records in multiple places that Simba were required purchase the *dawa* from *muganga*. This claim did not appear in any interviews with Simba I spoke with in North Kivu.

<sup>434</sup> Tucker, *He is in Heaven*, p 160.

<sup>435</sup> Tucker, *He is in Heaven*, p 185.

<sup>436</sup> Tucker, *He is in Heaven*, p 179.

Some weeks later, during the event in which Paul Carlson was killed, JW Tucker also died at the hands of Simba. Informing Angeline of his death, a colleague told her: “May God comfort your heart to know he was ready to die.”<sup>437</sup> She found consolation in the Book of John, chapter 12. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep in unto life eternal.”<sup>438</sup> Angeline read the passage over and over with her children until they felt “so warmed by the presence of the Holy Spirit that He seemed to be in that very room us.”<sup>439</sup> She wrote that she found herself consumed by an overwhelming desire for her own martyrdom, and that of her children, praying: “Oh, Lord, now that Jay’s gone it would be so much easier if you’d just let them come and kill us all.”<sup>440</sup> The fervor of her commitment to the celestial power of martyrdom trumped all other of Angeline’s most intense filial, material and worldly convictions and responsibilities.

Angeline ultimately rejoiced in her husband’s death, writing “Many years before, he had told his sister that his dearest wish was to live and die in Africa. By the grace of God, that wish was granted, for which all of us who knew and loved Jay are deeply grateful.”<sup>441</sup> The book closed with a quote, “He worked hard and served His Master well. He has fought a good fight, he has finished his course, he has kept the faith. Now there is laid up for him a crown—a martyr’s crown.”<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>437</sup> Tucker, *He is in Heaven*, p 210.

<sup>438</sup> Tucker, *He is in Heaven*, p 213.

<sup>439</sup> Ibid.

<sup>440</sup> Tucker, *He is in Heaven*, p 213.

<sup>441</sup> Tucker, *He is in Heaven*, p 223.

<sup>442</sup> Tucker, *He is in Heaven*, p 226.

Jay's family shared Angeline's pride in his sacrifice. His brother, C M told the New York Times that ultimate commitment "was just his life, that's all." C M, however, evoked Henry Luce's framework to further interpret the sacrifice of his brother and the other "Congo Martyrs." "We had all the reason in the world to be proud of him... He told us there was quite a bit of conflict in the Congo. He said it was infiltrated, influenced, conspired and financed by Communists."<sup>443</sup> Symbolically, C M sought to frame Jay's death as an event where an American Christian defender of democracy was brutally murdered by communist, anti-Christian soldiers. Despite the Tucker's insistence on their apoliticality, and their claim that their Congolese colleagues lacked any interest in politics, C M suggested that perhaps Jay died for more than the Gospel and may have also given his life to for the sake of American values in the Cold War.

Like C M and Henry Luce, many heartland American Protestants found this "logic of martyrdom" highly compelling. The specter of nuclear war and impending existential conflict between democracy and communism begat its own form of millenarian nationalism in the United States. Church leaders like Billy Graham saw that linking anti-communism and evangelism, argues Jeremy Rich, could bridge cultural divides between fundamentalists and mainline Protestants in the United States. Congo thus became a target for anti-communist Protestant crusades. In this framework the "Congo Martyrs" became powerful frontline casualties who could inspire common cause and commitment of the faithful in the USA.

Missionaries in post-Simba Congo were well aware of these dynamics. Alexander Reid, a Protestant missionary from Kentucky, struggled to understand why many young people from the mission he managed in the late 1950s in Tetela-speaking zones of eastern Congo became fervent

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<sup>443</sup> "Family Proud of Missionary Who Gave His Life in Congo," *New York Times*, 27 November, 1964 p 12.

Simba in 1964. His conclusion was that the core problem was “extreme liberal minded missionaries” who poured “cold water on the evangelistic fires” that could have stopped the Simba by changing their hearts.<sup>444</sup> The ranks of the Simba, Reid argued, were “two-thirds occupied by Chinese Communism.” The solution was thus twofold: spread the gospels of democracy and Christianity at the same time.

### **Death Talk in Postcolonial Congo**

These formulations of meaningful death propounded in *The Martyr, Africa Alive* and in Protestant missionary hagiography found little audience within Congo. Though sharing a common lexicon of martyrdom and the political power of ideology, these discourses were linked almost exclusively to transnational debates about the future of the world animated by the seemingly existential stakes of Cold War conflict. Yet these debates were influential in global engagement in the Congo. Protestant passions for saving the Congo spurred interest and engagement in the region by the US government—already inclined to intervene due Soviet engagement in central Africa. Catholic missionary efforts redoubled and helped frame the coming era of non-government directed development that still frames much of Congo’s economy and education system today. The strains of martyr valorization and the celebration of Lumumba’s death in particular are still part of the Congolese everyday.

Despite the social distance between these domains of debate occurring at the transnational level and within daily life in Congo, “death talk” has become a critical part of

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<sup>444</sup> Jeremy Rich, “Zaire for Jesus: Ford Philpot’s Evangelical Crusades in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 1966-1978,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 43 (2013): p 9.

Congolese political discourse. Death has come to frame the marking of time itself and signifies the ultimate index of political commitment.

The national calendar itself is grounded by martyrdom memories. January, in particular, marks an unusual density of politically important fatalities. On January 4, 1959 massive riots struck Leopoldville after a key pro-independence group, ABAKO,<sup>445</sup> was prevented from gathering by the colonial government.<sup>446</sup> Ensuing suppression caused, according to the state, forty-nine deaths—likely an underestimate.<sup>447</sup> January 4 has since become a national holiday called “Martyrs of Independence Day,” first observed in 1965. On January 17, 1961 Patrice Lumumba was assassinated in the secessionist Katanga province. January 17 is also a nationally observed holiday, called colloquially “Martyrs Day.”<sup>448</sup> Almost exactly forty years later, on January 16, 2001, Laurent Kabila was assassinated in his presidential residence, *Marbre*, by a sixteen-year-old member of his guard, Corporal Rachidi Kasereka.<sup>449</sup> January 16 is also a national holiday commemorating his death. Each calendar year begins with this season of reflection on the political significance of the deceased. Martyrdom in Congolese public life is personified and temporalized.

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<sup>445</sup> This stood for *Alliance des Bakongo* and was an ethno-national independence group led by the future first president of Congo, Joseph Kasavubu, who served under Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba. ABAKO was founded in 1955.

<sup>446</sup> Katrien Pype's interesting piece “The Drama(s) of Independence Day: Reflections on Political Affects and Aesthetics in Kinshasa (2010),” *Anthropology Southern Africa* 36, no. 1–2 (January 2013): 58–67, provides an interesting examination of the rituals around the observance of this day.

<sup>447</sup> Crawford Young, *Politics in Congo: Decolonization and Independence* (Princeton University Press, 1965), p 249.

<sup>448</sup> This is certainly true in Beni, North Kivu where the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of January are holidays and are collectively known as the “Days of the Martyrs.”

<sup>449</sup> It is perhaps worth noting, given the rest of this dissertation’s focus, that given his surname, Rachidi Kasereka is a common name among Kinande-speakers from northeastern Congo. He was identified by some news outlets, such as Belgium’s *Le Soir*, in the February 2, 2001 edition as an “ethnic Nande.” Rachidi is an eastern Congolese dialectical variant of the Muslim first name “Rashid.”



Postcolonial Congo is rife with the necropolitical—not as a question of sovereignty, or the “living dead,” as in Achille Mbembe’s work—but rather by profusions of “death talk” in public life.<sup>450</sup> For decades after the Simba rebellion the focus remained on debate over the relative political significance, and morality, of the dead. This talk takes place at bars and across dinner tables throughout Congo, but, as in 1964, death talk about Congo finds space in other scales and spaces in world.

Recently, much of this is due to with the recurring and spectacular, almost surreal, body counts of Congo’s history. The raw numbers shadow and sometime threaten to overwhelm Congo’s historiography.<sup>451</sup> Millions followed what Joseph Miller called the “way of death” from what is now Congo and Angola’s Atlantic coast zone during the slave trade,<sup>452</sup> millions more died during the Red Rubber period,<sup>453</sup> tens of thousands during the Congo Crisis (1960-1965),<sup>454</sup>

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<sup>450</sup> Most commonly the phrase “death talk” is used to describe psycho-social strategies used in end-of-life palliative medical care, see for example Bragi Skulason et al., “Death Talk: Gender Differences in Talking about One’s Own Impending Death,” *BMC Palliative Care* 13, no. 1 (December 2014). Obviously it is meant in a somewhat different sense here, but it shares the notion of attempting to inhabit death with meaning and, if possible, purpose.

<sup>451</sup> Nancy Rose Hunt in “An Acoustic Register, Tenacious Images, and Congolese Scenes of Rape and Repetition,” *Cultural Anthropology* 23, no. 2 (May 1, 2008): especially page 223, describes the “spectacle” of death and meanings that are made of it that link colonial and more recent acts of violence in Congo.

<sup>452</sup> Among other works see John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800* (Cambridge University Press, 1998); Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).and Joseph Calder Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830* (Univ of Wisconsin Press, 1996). These are not in the exact same zone but a shared central African Atlantic coast area. A number of slaves here came from Congo Basin regions.

<sup>453</sup> There is significant debate over this, but a prominent claim is from Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold’s Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1999).

<sup>454</sup> It is difficult to get exact counts, but *Vivante Afrique*, a Catholic magazine quoted later in this essay estimated “thousands” of dead just from among lower level catholic leadership.

and perhaps three to five million during the Congo Wars (1996-2003).<sup>455</sup> Voluminous, copious, egregious death is the most persistent leitmotif in histories and narratives of Congo.<sup>456</sup>

In postcolonial Congo, however, it is not the raw statistics of “bare death”—the biological transition of dying itself—that is the subject of conversation. The concern is with the quality of the passing, over whether the death was meaningful. At core, again, is martyrdom.<sup>457</sup> Necropolitical debates in Congo persist in the lines established in the post-Simba era. Much talk circulates around the “logic of martyrdom,” or what meanings can be made of all this death.<sup>458</sup> If scholarship on Congo often focuses on the magnitude and causes of killing, public debate in Congo is more concerned with the manner and morality of kinds of dying. Where Mbembe writes that his study of the necropolitical concerns a “semiosis of killing,” this chapter closes with more on the semiotics of ways of dying.<sup>459</sup>

## Martyrs, Rebels, and Time

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<sup>455</sup> Gérard Prunier, *Africa's World War: Congo, the Rwandan Genocide, and the Making of a Continental Catastrophe* (Oxford University Press, 2011). In chapter two of this book Prunier goes into some detail about the mounting death tolls.

<sup>456</sup> Sexual violence is also now an almost overwhelming theme in contemporary writing on Congo. A sampling of the “death and rape” literature includes Rene Lemarchand, *The Dynamics of Violence in Central Africa* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Jeanne M. Haskin, *The Tragic State of the Congo: From Decolonization to Dictatorship* (Algora Publishing, 2005); Ngwarsungu Chiwengo, “When Wounds and Corpses Fail to Speak: Narratives of Violence and Rape in Congo (DRC),” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 28, no. 1 (January 1, 2008): 78–92.; Fiona Fleck, “The Democratic Republic of the Congo: Quantifying the Crisis,” *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 87, no. 1 (January 1, 2009): 6–7.

<sup>457</sup> Giorgio Agamben links “bare life” with what might be called “bare death” when he writes “The term *soma*, which appears in later epochs as a good equivalent to our term “life,” originally meant only “corpse,” almost as if life in itself, which for the Greeks was broken down into a plurality of forms and elements, appeared only as a unity after death,” from *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford University Press, 1998) p 42.

<sup>458</sup> J.-A. Mbembé and Libby Meintjes, “Necropolitics,” *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (March 25, 2003): 36.

<sup>459</sup> Mbembé and Meintjes. Semiosis, in Mbembe, is connected to dialectical meaning, whereas I understand semiotics, in a Peircean sense, to be of a triadic structure: sign, object, and interpretant. In this case the sign is language or martyrdom, the object is the dead body, and the interpretants are those who contest the relation between the sign of martyrdom and the dead bodies as objects

Martyrs are most often produced by the creative writing of their followers. Their martyrdom serves to help constitute a community—to inspire and unite the faithful. Figures like Sister Marie-Clémentine Anuarite Nengapeta, for example, was beatified by Catholic church so that others might bear witness to a woman who gave her life for her commitments to the gospel. She was remembered because she “gave final proof of the seriousness of [her] confessional witness.”<sup>460</sup> Sister Nengapeta’s reward was to be placed into deep genealogy of ultimate commitment to eternal values and ideals by bureaucracies of veneration in the church.

Other martyrs fashion their own martyrdom, hoping their logic of sacrifice will be taken up by followers in the future. The object, manner, and framework of their death is shaped in advance of their passing. The actual act of dying serves as the ultimate attempt to define the meaning and purpose of their lives. Theirs is an aspirational martyrdom, invoking the semiotics of self-negation for a common good. These martyrs use public record to insert themselves into future interpretations of their existential choices. JW Tucker stated his martyrdom aspirations to family and friends as a young man. Gaston Soumialot published an entire periodical to make the political case for the power of rebel death. To make oneself a martyr requires great commitment but also strong planning and intention, most obviously in the form of making temporal and moral claims about one’s future death. Martyrs are not simply, as Mbembe argues, possessed with an overwhelming “desire for eternity.”<sup>461</sup> The presumptive martyr is most interested in the problems of reality, the urgencies of the present, or the world of the very near future. They are concerned about immediate impact.<sup>462</sup>

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<sup>460</sup> Bärbel Beinhauer-Köhler et al., “Martyr,” April 1, 2011, in Brill's Dictionary of Christianity, p 30.

<sup>461</sup> Mbembé and Meintjes, “Necropolitics.”

<sup>462</sup> “Martyr” comes from the Greek word μαρτυς [martus], meaning “witness.” It is about death as an act of witnessing, and about death being witnessed and proclaimed. In addition to personal intention, a key part of “being witnessed” as a martyr requires

Though the focus of this chapter is on three martyrdom strategies by actors operating in a Cold War framework, it is essential to try and locate the boundaries of these valorizations of death. To what audiences would attempts to politicize death founder and lose meaning? Certainly Simba warriors were largely unaware of such debates. Most of the many thousands who died in Congo during the First Republic (1960-1965) neither framed their future deaths within a register of martyrdom, nor did kith and kin attempt to retroactively assert that claim. The vicissitudes of the *mai* medicine made other totalizing frameworks of power, such as martyrdom, difficult to integrate. While death was a constant preoccupation for Simba soldiers, the goal was to negate the power of death through the force of the medicine, not to hope for retrospective political approval of ones passing. *Mai* did not give meaning to the act of dying, it denied the power of death over the body. The medicine was not about the liberation of the individual, but the transformation of the social. Though intended to affect groups of people bound together and kin, *mai* fundamentally operated within the narrowest of temporal horizons, enabling the wielder to exist in the precarity of a violent moment. *Mai* did not persist. It needed to be applied continually. It would validate an individual's commitment and discipline every time it was needed. *Mai's* innate ephemerality resisted attempts to project its power into the future or the past—to politicize its capabilities. Those who died under the *mai* were found wanting by the medicine. They were not heroes, they were failures. They transgressed the *règlements* and bore the consequences. Glory was only for the survivors. The logics of *mai* and discourses of martyrdom operated with fundamentally incompatible modes of meaning-making around death.

The poem penned by the Congolese Catholic women's offers a more direct critique of martyrdom narratives. It engages the core values of the martyrdom frameworks head-on. In

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making compelling claims about the motives of one's killers. Martyr narratives make clear that the act of killing a martyr automatically negates the legitimacy of the killers claims to morality. The martyr must be construed as essentially innocent.

choosing to “cry for our children who died for nothing” in 1964 these women actively refused attempts to apply political or religious significance to death. If, in their respective domains, Gaston Soumialot and his colleagues painted rebel death as heroic, and Christians sought redemption for death in an inspired church and in the kingdom of heaven, the Congolese Mothers refused the very premise of the debate. Making meaning out of the death of children was not possible. The quashing out of countless possible futures, of responsibility and reciprocity, made any attempt at the politicization of their progeny’s death an unacceptable attempt to mediate the futility of loss. In choosing to mourn, in committing only to lament, these women offered the most radical critique to the political and religious work others busily pursued. These women refused, in their grief, to resolve the fundamentally “enigmatic” nature of “losing what we cannot fully fathom,” as Judith Butler suggests.<sup>463</sup> In so doing they evaded the constraints of proliferating martyrdom discourse and found possibility in an embrace of brokenness.

A focus on martyrdom discourses allows this chapter to examine one facet of the memory of the Simba rebellion—one with an enduring presence in Congolese public life. It traces the afterlives of the rebellion in attempts to make meaning of death in political and religious domains. It also marks a return to multiple, shifting scales of discourse and practice. It examines a moment where, at the global scale, Congo’s Simba rebels and their causalities were important international subjects, dominating conversation in the press, at the Vatican, in Washington, and among Protestant missions organizations. The language of martyrdom became one of the few registers of meaning-making shared by actors on all sides, and at many scales, around the rebellion. It allowed for a common conversation about the costs and possibilities of the war.

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<sup>463</sup> Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (Verso, 2006), 22.

## **Conclusion: A Nation of Martyrs**

“Death talk” did not find its apotheosis during post-1964 period. If anything, death talk in Congo is more vociferous today than ever before. Didier Gondola, in his *History of Congo*, argues that by 1990 Cold War backers of Mobutu’s regime “could no longer ignore the martyrdom of millions of Zairian people” and began to abandon the aging dictator.<sup>464</sup> Gondola infers that every death, for any reason, in Mobutu’s Zaire was an act of martyrdom. This argument suggests that the martyrdom discourses this chapter sought to trace continue to hold power in political debate. That an entire people could be martyrs by virtue of their citizenship pushes the possibilities of the “logic of martyrdom” to its limit.<sup>465</sup>

Gondola’s claim joins a roaring babble of “death talk,” brimming with competing “logics of martyrdom,” that circulate throughout Congo today. The once vibrant specters of neo-colonialism and totalitarianism lost definition when Congo’s primary belligerents became its neighbors and those in power appear perpetually on the brink of losing control. Returning to Schmitt, such conditions often prove fecund ground for partisans ready to engage yet another martyrdom narrative. The question remains: who bears the weight of framing death as sacrifice and constructing both the identity and culpability of persecutors? Given the morass of contemporary Congo’s political landscape, it becomes difficult to distil clear belligerents and provide meaning and purpose behind all violent death.

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<sup>464</sup> Ch Didier Gondola, *The History of Congo* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002), pg 152.

<sup>465</sup> One can muse about what such population scale martyrdom might be called perhaps “genomartyrdom” or “necronationalism?”

Filip de Boeck argues that “death has become so omnipresent... in Congo as a whole, that the labor of loss and mourning has ceased to be meaningful.”<sup>466</sup> This chapter argues the opposite. Tremendous creative work, much breath and oceans of ink, are committed to the political and ideological work needed to insert meaning into death. De Boeck is not entirely wrong, however. A fatigued refusal to find meaning in loss and mourning also finds roots in the response of many Congolese to the scale and pace of death in the 1964 rebellion. Yet, much of the “omnipresent” death talk that de Boeck finds in Congo is linked to martyr registers. These are continually deployed by and for figures seeking to cast meaning in the shadow of death. Acts of radical self-negation and ultimate commitment to new, imaginary social worlds continues as well. Martyr narratives emerge again and again as militia groups make commitments to die for their country, cause, or patron. Pentecostal martyrdom stories surge in Congo’s urban spaces, inspiring youth to imagine forms of social renewal that demand ultimate personal sacrifice.<sup>467</sup> Lament, and the possibilities afforded by refusing to find meaning in death, stubbornly persist as well.

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<sup>466</sup> Filip De Boeck, “The Apocalyptic Interlude: Revealing Death in Kinshasa,” *African Studies Review* 48, no. 2 (September 30, 2005): p 13.

<sup>467</sup> *Ibid*, p 26-27.

## Chapter Seven: “A Cannibalistic Entity:”<sup>468</sup> Consumption, Morality, and the UN Stabilization Industry

Children play. They thread the gaps between tight clusters of houses in dusty neighborhoods, absorbed until dark in endless games of their own devising. This play demands relentless negotiations over ever-changing rules. Voices rise to shout and tease. For those that cannot keep up one insult predominates: “MONUC! MONUC!” For the residents of Beni, a town in the North Kivu province of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the acronym is obsolete but the meaning is clear. Being “MONUC,” a catchall for United Nations peacekeeping personnel, means being the odd one out, the child not playing the game in the right way. Beyond these dusty makeshift playgrounds—in the markets, bars, and churches of Beni—the insult resonates. While massively, even overwhelmingly, present in the community, personnel of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, known by its French acronym MONUSCO, are often accused of playing by their own secret rules. UN agents do not seem to comprehend the basic social expectations that govern morality and neighborliness in communities they have occupied for over sixteen years. Beyond deficiencies in political maneuvering and military strategy, a slow boil crisis of relationality is making MONUSCO’s piecemeal engagement in eastern Congo increasingly untenable. This chapter traces how an

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<sup>468</sup> This quote comes from Martin Kobler, the head of the UN Mission in Congo, in August of 2013 where he fought claims made by Beni’s residents that peacekeepers were eating local residents. The article suggests residents of Beni called the UN a “entité de cannibalisme.” See “Beni: Martin Kobler Dément Les Allégations de Cannibalisme Portées Contre Des Casques Bleus.” November 11, 2013. *Radio Okapi*. <http://www.radiookapi.net/actualite/2013/11/28/beni-martin-kobler-dement-les-allegations-de-cannibalisme-portees-contre-des-casques-bleus>.



irruptive claim of cannibalism in April, 2014 laid bare the persistent, historically-derived tensions that trouble relations between members of the Beni community and the UN personnel that inhabit their city. These incommensurabilities are perhaps most fraught when it comes to UN engagements with contemporary warriors in eastern Congo who using the kinds of *mai* medicines this dissertation traces.

In 1999 the U.N. Security Council approved resolution 1279, establishing in Congo what is now the most extensive and expensive peacekeeping mission in UN history.<sup>469</sup> Operational costs are nearly 4 million dollars per day.<sup>470</sup> 26,934 personnel, including over 18,000 uniformed peacekeepers, currently occupy Congolese soil. Since 2013, special operatives work under a uniquely “robust” mandate that calls for “peace enforcement” through “neutralizing” rebel groups under the auspices of a Force Intervention Brigade (FIB).<sup>471</sup> The derogation of the FIB’s preemptive violence, however, seems to pose a direct challenge to basic precepts of the United Nations charter.<sup>472</sup> Against objections voiced by member states to this unprecedented mandate, the “endless crisis” of Congo’s history was used to justify the FIB’s exceptionality.<sup>473</sup> As the brigade eliminates those deemed antithetical to stability, a kind of supranational “commissarial dictatorship” unfolds, where international “law is temporarily suspended in order that it might ultimately be implemented.”<sup>474</sup> MONUSCO’s attempt to restore the rule of law in Congo now

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<sup>469</sup> MONUSCO was originally called MONUC: the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Its initial mandate was concerned largely with observation and monitoring ceasefire activities.

<sup>470</sup> Approved budget (07/2014 – 06/2015): \$1,398,475,300 see UN publication number A/C.5/69/17.

<sup>471</sup> “Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.” 2015. S/2015/486. MONUSCO.

<sup>472</sup> Particularly by stipulations outlined in Chapter VII of the UN Charter concerning military participation with Member States.

<sup>473</sup> The term used in Rene Lemarchand. 2011. *The Dynamics of Violence in Central Africa*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

paradoxically requires neither serious external oversight nor a diligent application of Congolese government participation and authorization.<sup>475</sup>

Despite this uniquely capacious mandate and tremendous cost in blood and money, the MONUSCO project can claim limited success. Billions are spent, thousands of soldiers deployed, and legions of global technical experts engaged; meanwhile rampant insecurity plagues the Kivu provinces, the epicenter of UN activities. The Congolese national army (FARDC) grapples with violent internal factionalism, new rebel movements coalesce, and long established militias splinter, take new forms, and forge troubling alliances.<sup>476</sup> In the face of evidence of sustained failure, MONUSCO resolutely articulates its purpose as the “protection of civilians, humanitarian personnel and human rights defenders under imminent threat of physical violence and to support the Government of the DRC in its stabilization and peace consolidation efforts.” Thus, in spite of surging violence in the east, government suppression of pro-democracy activism in Kinshasa, and nationwide political instability, MONUSCO leaders recently congratulated themselves for their “active engagement in the Democratic Republic of Congo in service of peace.”<sup>477</sup> For many in the town of Beni, host to four large UN military encampments and a regional airbase, these celebratory sentiments sharply rankle, and the phrase “active engagement” carries with it potentially nefarious implications.

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<sup>474</sup> Giorgio Agamben. 2008. *State of Exception*. University of Chicago Press. p 33. The category of “commissarial dictatorship” is Agamben’s elaboration of a concept he takes from Carl Schmitt.

<sup>475</sup> For a defense of the FIB, see Marget Mutisi’s analysis of this project at the Social Science Research Council’s Kujena Amani blog: <http://forums.ssrc.org/kujenga-amani/2015/07/26/redefining-peacekeeping-the-force-intervention-brigade-in-the-democratic-republic-of-congo/#.VmHyAt-rSRs>

<sup>476</sup> Verweuen, Judith, and Calude Iguma Wakenge. 2015. “Understanding Armed Group Proliferation in the Eastern Congo.” Political Settlements Research Programme. Rift Valley Institute, p 30.

<sup>477</sup> “Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.” 2015. S/2015/486. MONUSCO.

## **Industrial Aid**

Few in Beni are reading UN press releases. MONUSCO's self-fashioned profile does not emerge in local discourse around the UN's role in eastern Congo. Their texts are displaced by more irruptive sensory experiences for most Beniciens. These include the continual rumble of UN trucks trundling over eviscerated roads to deliver imported food, water, and coffee to MONUSCO personnel. The squeals and sighs of these trucks play in incongruous harmony with the low, incessant drone of diesel generators providing 24 hours of electricity to UN bases in a context where less than seven percent of people have access to any form of power. In large swaths of town high walls securing MONUSCO's international staff rise above the urban landscape and enclose three large UN bases, the offices of UNICEF, UNOCHA, World Food Program, UNDP, UNHCR and numerous other UN agencies. These red brick edifices do more than simply secure personnel: they obscure the quotidian practices and activities of an unknowable parallel population. Severine Autessere's description of these NGO spaces as "fortified bubbles" is apt.<sup>478</sup> It misleads only in that it implies a transparent membrane. Even more accurate might be to imagine the walls as occluded one-way glass, simultaneously concealing the inner workings of MONUSCO's operations while heavy gates and watch towers functions as apertures for the observation of the people of Beni.

From behind the veil various technical staff emerge: circulating through town in NGO-branded vehicles as they interpellate the people of Beni into a population—calling them into

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<sup>478</sup> Autessere, Severine. 2015. "Trouble in Peaceland." *Foreign Policy*. October 6.

being as a subject for developmental intervention.<sup>479</sup> The demographic techniques deployed to produce a portrait of this population are often profoundly intimate. Surveys and observations probe the most private domains of life: sexual habits and transgressions,<sup>480</sup> childcare and abuse,<sup>481</sup> and the vagaries of extreme poverty and disease.<sup>482</sup> Beni, and many communities like it, is a “development laboratory” for humanitarian experimentation: the people both control and variable.<sup>483</sup>

The epistemological approach most in vogue in contemporary development is not command of local history or mastery of vernacular language, such as was prized by international agents in the imperial age, but rather “thematic expertise” exercised by short-term technocrats.<sup>484</sup> Aggregating and acting on relevant themes is necessary if an entity wishes to demonstrate “optimal development” strategies—i.e. ones most likely to be funded by groups like the World Bank—that are socially “equitable and environmentally sustainable” while touching on “multiple sectors.”<sup>485</sup> A compelling single development project must now claim the capacity to

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<sup>479</sup> Borrowing from Althusser, the subject of development is called into being as they are hailed as such and recognize themselves as being the ones addressed: this being the act of interpellation. Althusser, Louis. 2001. *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. NYU Press.

<sup>480</sup> For instance: Jocelyn Kelly, Justin Kabanga, Will Cragin, Lys Alcayna-Stevens, Sadia Haider, and Michael J. Vanrooyen. 2012. “If Your Husband Doesn’t Humiliate You, Other People Won’t”: Gendered Attitudes Towards Sexual Violence in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.” *Global Public Health* 7 (3): 285–98.

<sup>481</sup> For instance, Malemo Kalisya, Luc, Paluku Lussy Justin, Christophe Kimona, Kavira Nyavandu, Kamabu Mukekulu Eugenie, Kasereka Muhindo Lusi Jonathan, Kasereka Masumbuko Claude, and Michael Hawkes. 2011. “Sexual Violence Toward Children and Youth in War-Torn Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.” *PLoS ONE* 6 (1): e15911.

<sup>482</sup> At the forefront are Norwegian Refugee Council, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, the McCain Institute, and Solidarités in Beni.

<sup>483</sup> Tilley, Helen. 2011. *Africa as a Living Laboratory: Empire, Development, and the Problem of Scientific Knowledge, 1870-1950*. University of Chicago Press. In particular chapter 2.

<sup>484</sup> Autesserre, Séverine. 2014. *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention*. Cambridge University Press.

<sup>485</sup> See for example the cited World Bank project in Brazil that received over 700 million dollars of funding called “SWAp for Parana Multisector Development Project” where these themes are articulated.

simultaneously intervene in domains such as “general public administration, general agriculture, fishing, forestry, health, sub-national government administration, general education, environmental management, education for all, health system performance, managing for development results, and administrative and civil service reform.”<sup>486</sup> The burden of proving the success of a high-impact multi-sector projects requires intensive data gathering activities to, at a minimum, establish an initial baseline and demonstrate the purported efficacy of the interventions.

The results of such data gathering are not encouraging. Despite decades of multi-billion-dollar interventions, the lives of people in the region are increasingly less secure, less stable, and less prosperous. At the same time the MONUSCO enclaves from which much of this information is generated are further entrenched with funding from seemingly unending reserves of development resources. In relative terms, these comprise islands of extreme wealth in tantalizing proximity to sites of desperate poverty. Food, equipment, expertise, power, data, water, and salaries move behind MONUSCO’s veil of security and privacy in Beni. Among community members angry, persistent questions recur concerning what, exactly, UN personnel are doing and why their work is so egregiously expensive when compared to the experience of others living in a region ranked by the UN’s own Human Development Index as among the “least developed” on earth.<sup>487</sup>

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<sup>486</sup> Ibid.

<sup>487</sup> United Nations Development Programme. 2014. *Human Development Report 2014: Sustaining Human Progress: Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building Resilience*. United Nations Publications.

Throughout Beni's sprawling neighborhoods, raucous clubs like *Le Bourgeoisie*, and often even more raucous churches such as the Audacious Gospel International,<sup>488</sup> much debate revolves around comprehending this paradox of a massive, and massively expensive, UN presence against a long, inexorable decline in local security and prosperity. One obvious explanation predominates: UN personnel are not interested in peace in Congo, quite the opposite. They profit on Congo's instability as agents of consumption, not protection. MONUSCO's operatives, like so many others in the past and present, are outsiders "eating" Congo's wealth, leaving nothing for local people.<sup>489</sup> This framing fits neatly within the vernacular historical imagination of Congo, as documented in locally produced documentary films available on cheap videodiscs. This narrative suggests that Congo's riches of rubber, copper, uranium, diamonds, coltan, and gold have long drawn rapacious predators. MONUSCO are simply taking their place at the end of a line of opportunists. They have mastered the art of manipulating what is now eastern Congo's most abundant commodity: suffering—both materially experienced and discursively constructed. This framing is shared by some development workers themselves; one told me in a moment of startling (perhaps ironic) candor that his USAID contract would be renewed because he was "in the business of human suffering and, in Congo, business is very good."<sup>490</sup>

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<sup>488</sup> An example of the "*eglises de reveil*" described by Filip de Boeck, 2011. "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics." *Cultural Anthropology* 26 (2): 263–86.

<sup>489</sup> Theodore Trefon. 2004. *Reinventing Order in the Congo: How People Respond to State Failure in Kinshasa*. Zed Books. See the section on "eating" specifically page 14.

<sup>490</sup> This was communicated to me in this words by an American security officer for one of the largest multi-sector relief projects taking place in eastern Congo in 2015.

Scholars like Jean Francois Bayart centralize eating as a foundational political metaphor for corruption and rent seeking behaviors.<sup>491</sup> The UN's "eating" of misery can be placed within this domain. Anger towards MONUSCO marks the outlines of what Raymond Williams calls a "structure of feeling"—a "nexus of social relations and experiences"—present in the contemporary community of Beni, engaged and entangled with developmentalist "official consciousness" represented by the acts and speech of MONUSCO and its partners.<sup>492</sup> This structure of feeling exists in contradistinction with, even as it is partly constituted by, the presence of a developmental orthodoxy endorsed by multiple third sector actors.

### **Peacekeepers and Cannibals**

Consider the following account. One morning in late April of 2014, UN peacekeepers arrived unexpectedly at a small banana farm just outside the city of Beni. Already present were two people: an older woman and her 5-year-old granddaughter, tending the trees and harvesting ready fruit. The peacekeepers were in full uniform: armed and equipped for patrol. Nothing could be communicated between the soldiers and the civilians as most UN troops speak neither French nor Swahili, the *lingua francae* of Beni territory.<sup>493</sup> The granddaughter was some distance away when the soldiers arrived, so began walking toward her grandmother to see why the troops were there. As she passed behind a stand of trees, she heard a scream, then her grandmother's panicked voice shouting, "They are killing me!" Hearing this the girl raced into the forest to

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<sup>491</sup> Bayart, Jean-François. *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*. Polity, 2009.

<sup>492</sup> Williams, Raymond. 1977. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford University Press. See p. 130, though I share Mitchum Huehms critique found in his review essay in *Contemporary Literature* 51, 2 "Structures of Feeling: Or, How to Do Things (or Not) with Books" (2010) critique of these as being "imprecise and provisional" by virtue of the fact that they are unfolding in the present.

<sup>493</sup> Autesserre, Séverine. 2014. *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention*. Cambridge University Press.

hide. From the shelter of the bush she watched uniformed UN personnel carry the wounded woman into a marked white Land Cruiser Prado and drive toward town. The girl knew immediately what was going to happen to her grandmother: she was to be eaten.

The hysterical granddaughter shared this story, or a version of it, hours later in the main commons near the mayor's office in the center of town. The report of her startling testimony came to me by *radio trottoir* (pavement radio) from multiple sources within hours of her telling.<sup>494</sup> Friends stopped by throughout the day, breathlessly adding some new detail, disputing some fact, and analyzing the story with whomever happened to be there. Some claimed to be part of the crowd that gathered as the young girl screamed to anyone who would listen that her grandmother was taken. Most championed her call for an audience with the mayor, the only individual perceived to have the power to force the UN to return the grandmother. Towards the end of the day a number of motorcycle taxi-men drove to the UN's Nepalese Battalion base three kilometers away from town center—the purported location of the kidnapped woman—to force her release. The *motards* threw rocks at the bristling guard towers and the huge blue metal gate. Local police arrived to disperse the crowd. Shots were fired into the air and the riot dissipated.

Later that evening the grandmother was found to be a patient at a local hospital. UN spokespeople reported that while on patrol *les casques bleu* saw the woman chop down a banana tree that then accidentally fell on her, so they took her to a hospital for treatment. This story convinced few. For my interlocutors the ultimate safety of the grandmother was never the UN soldiers' goal. Her eventual reappearance was interpreted as a desperate ruse when the plot was uncovered. The UN soldiers, they intimated, were planning to eat the women until the riot broke

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<sup>494</sup> See Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar. 2004. *Worlds of Power: Religious Thought and Political Practice in Africa*. Oxford University Press for a summary of the literature on *Radio Trottoir* especially page 39. *Radio trottoir* can be summarized as publically performed rumor network.



out. The soldiers only unveiled the old woman to protect themselves from community ire. The granddaughter saved her grandmothers life by marshalling the community against the would-be cannibals in uniform.

To my friends the suggestion that MONUSCO agents might kidnap a woman in broad daylight with the intention of eating her was not difficult to believe. Whatever obscure motives compelled such desires could be placed on the continuum of MONUSCO's apparatuses of concealment and consumptive excess. No longer content to literally capitalize on Congolese suffering during war and violence, it was seen as reasonable that peacekeepers would finally be feasting on the physical flesh of their charges. Shades of stories of the public consumption of a Simba warrior's body by a state official, some fifty years prior, recurred.

Indeed, these kinds of claims are not new. Accusations of cannibalism have a deep genealogy in Congo, long before the Simba rebellion. Congo was a nexus for the trope of jungle peoples eating fellow humans, particularly in the remote northeast, where MONUSCO's operations are targeted today. Cannibalism became a generic hallmark in travelogues of precolonial Congo. Henry Morton Stanley's account of travel in Congo, *Through the Dark Continent*, is so replete with tales of "running the gauntlet through cannibal lands" that it functions as something of a motif in the work.<sup>495</sup> Cannibalism was then reportedly used by concessionary forces as a tactic against resistant communities during the Red Rubber period.<sup>496</sup>

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<sup>495</sup> Stanley was an agent for King Leopold II's *International African Association* in Congo, and his account was used to provide one justification for colonial intervention in the region. From Henry Morton Stanley. *Through the Dark Continent: Or, The Sources of the Nile Around the Great Lakes of Equatorial Africa, and Down the Livingstone River to the Atlantic Ocean*. Harper & Brothers, 1878.

<sup>496</sup> Hunt, Nancy Rose. "An Acoustic Register, Tenacious Images, and Congolese Scenes of Rape and Repetition." *Cultural Anthropology* 23, no. 2 (May 1, 2008): 239.

In 1909, military officials in northeastern Congo maintained that their outposts were “surrounded by cannibals.”<sup>497</sup>

This fixation became enmeshed in the popular imagination of the region. *Tintin au Congo* for instance, by famous Belgian comic artist Hergé, is rife with what Nancy Rose Hunt identified as a trope of “ribald cannibal humor.”<sup>498</sup> Western missionaries to Congo also participated in this form of humor. Some sent images of themselves sitting in cooking pots surrounded by their Congolese colleagues to family in the United States and Europe.<sup>499</sup> Others framed cannibalism as an example of the most forms of spiritual degradation, evidence of the tremendous need for the gospel. Missionaries with the Congo Balolo mission in 1905 sent a newsletter to supporters in the United States inviting them to “think of the centuries of darkness and heathenism, including cannibalism, in which these people lived,” and described with horror how converts confessed to participating in “cannibal feasts.”<sup>500</sup> This was evidence, they argued, of “the grossest forms of evil” present among people “so low and material that it would seem impossible to raise them to spiritual beings.”<sup>501</sup> In both mockery and condemnation, cannibalism indexed the opposite pole of civilization—humanity at its most extreme form: carnal, wild, self-destructive, irredeemably corrupted.

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<sup>497</sup> See Pottier, Johan. “Rights Violations, Rumour, and Rhetoric: Making Sense of Cannibalism in Mambasa, Ituri (Democratic Republic of Congo).” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 13, no. 4 (December 1, 2007): 825–43.

<sup>498</sup> See Nancy Rose Hunt. “Tintin and the Interruptions of Congolese Comics.” *Images and Empires: Visuality in Colonial and Postcolonial Africa*, 2002, 90–123, and this specific term Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo*. Duke University Press, 1999: 134.

<sup>499</sup> One example in the Trumpets book. See also Jan Pieterse. *White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992. where he connects this cannibal images of images of conquest.

<sup>500</sup> RBMU Archive, University of Edinburgh. Congo Balolo Mission Record, CSCNWW 33/35/1.

<sup>501</sup> Ibid.

Peter Kitson calls cannibal accusations “the most notorious form of colonial ‘othering’ both as alleged practice and critical construct.”<sup>502</sup> From the colonial era through the postcolonial period, cannibal claims comprised “a lively oral genre” among Congolese, becoming the grist of accusation and purported evidence of immorality and witchcraft throughout the country.<sup>503</sup> In the area around Beni witchcraft accusations and cannibal claims were historically blurred as women, in particular, were accused of traveling by night to “eat organs” of their victims—a way to describe the hidden effects of a potent curse.<sup>504</sup> Long-term dictator Mobutu Sese Seko was doggedly accused of cannibalism in rumors—including those recounted by his Belgian son-in-law Pierre Janssen—a charge that served as a political critique for the consumptive excesses of his kleptocratic regime.<sup>505</sup>

As the country descended into chaos during the Congo wars, cannibalism accusations repeated yet again, perhaps most strongly in the Ituri Conflict in the early 2000s, where Johan Pottier traces claims of human consumption levied by militia groups against one another. A moral threshold was crossed when one group purportedly “authorized the consumption of human flesh”—a grievance held as seriously as claims of genocide by opposing fighters.<sup>506</sup> If cannibalism as accusation is persistent in Congo’s past and present, and “eating” as a social and political act is a broad metaphor for corruption found across Africa, the consumption of bodies is

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<sup>502</sup> Within Kristen Guest’s *Eating Their Words: Cannibalism and the Boundaries of Cultural Identity*. SUNY Press, 2014 in an essay called “The Eucharist of Hell; or, Eating People is Right: Romantic Representations of Cannibalism,” by Peter Kitson.

<sup>503</sup> White, Luise. *Speaking With Vampires: Rumor and History in East and Central Africa*. University of California Press, 2000: 9.

<sup>504</sup> Billy Graham Center Archive, Collection 438. Paul Fredrick Hurlburt, Jr. Transcript 2, interview conducted on November 8, 1990.

<sup>505</sup> Janssen, Pierre. *A la cour de Mobutu*. Paris: Michel Lafon, 1997: p 123.

<sup>506</sup> See Pottier, Johan. “Rights Violations, Rumour, and Rhetoric: Making Sense of Cannibalism in Mambasa, Ituri (Democratic Republic of Congo).” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 13, no. 4 (December 1, 2007): 825–43.

only the most egregious example of antisocial action: the paragon of morally bankrupt expressions of political power.

But what to make of the particular account of cannibalism shared above? How could the seemingly outrageous claims of this child be so readily accepted by many in the community of Beni? One explanation is that individuals find the charge of cannibalism reasonable because it links MONUSCO to the kinds of unbounded corruption the cannibal metaphor so potently indexes. The quotidian, conspicuous and spectacular consumption of the UN is simultaneously closed off and hidden from local people. The millions of dollars spent by the UN come into Beni in a kind of consumption cul-de-sac represented by MONUSCO infrastructure. Seemingly limitless money flows into Beni, but only into nodes behind walls, inside cars, on planes and helicopters branded with two black on white letters. Vast sums of money are thus present but never integrated into local economies. There is no membrane for exchange, for opportunities to gain. All this while violence against members of the community, the pretext for MONUSCO's presence, occurs just meters from UN patrol routes and outposts.

Tracing these dynamics sheds light on why the UN is more often the target of protest and outrage in Beni than the egregiously incompetent, consumptive, and impotent state. Certainly, the UN provides a safer outlet for critique and the venting of frustration than potential vengeful state officials. Citizens can openly critique MONUSCO without fear of reprisal. This is not true of the government. Outspoken political critics are routinely threatened and sometimes killed.<sup>507</sup> Members of the government themselves recognize the political utility of framing MONUSCO as a scapegoat. In March of 2015 President Joseph Kabila called for a drawdown of UN forces, vaguely implicating the UN in ongoing instability in the east.

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<sup>507</sup> My conversation with Jason Stearns in the summer of 2015, and also the testimony of Adrien Ngunza in Goma, Congo from an interview in December 2013.

Even so, it is important to note that the anger against the UN is not simply about its purported structural role in perpetuating war. As the account above indicates, the violence, unfairness, and selfishness of MONUSCO emerges in stories of personal, visceral, embodied violence. The consumptive excesses of the UN are perceived as continually enacted by evil individuals, not functions of disembodied global political dynamics or bureaucratic inefficacies. In a way, the cannibal critique is a refusal to accept the UN's self-fashioned apolitically. In MONUSCO literature attempts are made to analyze "local" conditions to guide interventions that inexplicably exclude the UN as a local actor. Drawing MONUSCO agents into the moral economy of the community of Beni via cannibal accusation demonstrates an impulse towards inclusion by the people in the city. In a region with a deep history of debates about inclusion and exclusion, this cannibal debates slots in as only the most recent manifestation of an intense genealogy of disputation.

Riot was used across Africa as a method for reminding powerful actors of their relations of obligation, as Jonathan Glassmon's work on upheaval on the Swahili coast describes.<sup>508</sup> The confusion wrought by these actions further reveals the depth of the gulf between how the UN interprets the Congolese subject and shapes interventions in their lives, and how recipients and observers of that intervention perceive these intentions and actions.

### **Consuming Child Soldiers**

This profound interpretative incommensurability generates ongoing tension, confusion, and conflict. There is perhaps no more volatile and intense point of specific disputation than over how to interpret and manage violent children. As Filip de Boeck argues, in Congo "children

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<sup>508</sup> Glassman, Jonathon. *Feasts and Riot: Revelry and Rebellion on the Swahili Coast, 1856-88*. James Currey, 1995.

increasingly emerge as the focal point of... social and cultural” contestations.<sup>509</sup> These disputes are perhaps most intense in Beni around the cases of UNICEF intervention in the Demobilization, Disarmament, and Reintegration (DDR) of former child soldiers.

If the cannibal emerged as trope at the nexus of global and local discourses around immorality and inhumanity in Congo, the child soldier category has a more exclusively international and temporally shallow genealogy.<sup>510</sup> For many decades in international law the child at war was only legible as a category of potential victim, a key element of the civilian population. The first serious legal efforts to frame children as potential perpetrators of violence came in 1977 when members of the International Committee of the Red Cross attempted to amend the Geneva Conventions with the so-called Additional Protocols in order to include the mobilization of children in conflict as a war crime, prosecutable under international law. This was controversial not least because the mobilization of young men was the foundation of most national armies, and squabbles over the exact age and definition of a child soldier complicated the ICRC’s intervention.

As the legal category emerged as a subject of debate so did the child soldier as a figure in popular discourse and academic inquiry. In the mid 1980s the category first appears as a significant subject of study, its prevalence intensifying partly due to broader child protection movements and the presence child soldiers in conflicts in Yugoslavia, Sierra Leone and El Salvador. Between 1980 and 2000 mentions of the term “child soldier” increased by over 500%

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<sup>509</sup> Filip de Boeck’s chapter in Theodore Trefon, *Reinventing Order in the Congo: How People Respond to State Failure in Kinshasa*. Zed Books, 2004, p. 155.

<sup>510</sup> Joan Scott suggests that genealogies of categories should form the base of critique around the post-structural subject in “The Evidence of Experience.” *Critical Inquiry*, 1991, 773–97.

in published materials.<sup>511</sup> In the 1990s the first NGOs dedicated to eradicating child soldier mobilization came into being: War Child was established in 1993 and Child Soldiers International in 1998. The most significant legal development after the 1977 Additional Protocols was the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court making it a war crime to “recruit or enlist children under the age of 15.”<sup>512</sup> It is this statute that has been used as the keystone war crime accusation against Congolese warlords like Tomas Lubanga (including a conviction for child soldier recruitment in 2012), Jean-Pierre Bemba, and Bosco Ntaganda (trial ongoing). Proving in a court of law that a warlord engaged in the mobilization of children has, in relative terms, a much lower evidentiary threshold than demonstrating the murder of civilians, rape, or other war crime accusations.

In Congo it is MONUSCO that bears the primary burden for implementing international law in the country. Due to the exceptionality of the legal category of the child soldier, and the evidentiary power of child soldier mobilization in ICC trials, special procedures exist around the management of child soldiers in MONUSCO’s stabilization activities. These are described as “specific obligations regarding child protection” in official literature. As rebel militia groups, for instance, are integrated into the national army (FARDC) after peace agreements, the troops are vetted to ensure that no children are present. If children are found in the ranks, as is the case more than 60% of the time in North Kivu, they are tracked into a separate DDR program administered by UNICEF.<sup>513</sup> Combatants have no choice in the matter. Age at the moment of

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<sup>511</sup> Google Labs N-Gram search conducted in November, 2015.

<sup>512</sup> Rosen, David M. “Child Soldiers, International Humanitarian Law, and the Globalization of Childhood.” *American Anthropologist* 109, no. 2 (2007): 283.

<sup>513</sup> “UNICEF Annual Report 2014.” United Nations Children’s Fund, 2014.

processing determines an individual's presence in one of two tracks: either "integration" into the FARDC or "demobilization" into civilian life.<sup>514</sup>

While removing children from the field of war is an ethically necessary task, and effectively smoothing their paths toward civilian life vital, it must be acknowledged that the category of child soldier is complex and layered for people living in North Kivu. As previous chapters demonstrate, there is a deep history of child warfare in eastern Congo. Often, children provided a vital and powerful counter to elite venality and rejected exclusionary practices by recalcitrant elders. But there were, and are, diffuse forms of child soldiering. In contemporary Beni we can condense some of this complexity, in a heuristic sense, by dividing child soldiers in eastern Congo into three categories: *les bandits*, *shege*, and *mai-mai*.

*Les bandits* (bandits) are children that are often violently coerced into armed groups run by warlords like Tomas Lubanga and Bosco Ntaganda, mentioned above—militia groups frequently linked with international political forces.<sup>515</sup> Informants in Beni describe *les bandits* as predatory and dangerous. Where child soldiers within the national army or militia groups can occupy morally ambiguous positions, *les bandits* are seen as solely anti-social agents. Children involved in these movements are framed as pawns in political and economic games being played by "big men." They serve as foot soldiers for brutally extractive warlords. The perception is that these young ones are broken: drugged up, used up, and cast aside when no longer necessary. Unable or unwilling to resist their coercion into violent anti-social militias, these children are

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<sup>514</sup> Rene Lemarchand in *The Dynamics of Violence in Central Africa*. University of Pennsylvania Press (2011) quotes data suggesting on average over 30% of a given militia in the late second Congo War period were children under the age of 15%.

<sup>515</sup> Stearns, Jason K. *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa*. Public Affairs, 2011. Examples include the RCD to CNDP to M23 to the MCRC demonstrates such persistent rebranding.



seen as another exploited Congolese resource lost to the whims and venality of powerful men displaying extraverted expansionist desires to control communities outside their own.

This frame, too, comes with a deep genealogy, carrying traces of the pre-colonial *ruga ruga* in east Africa that John Iliffe called “wild young men without roots” mobilized by elites for theft and conquest. Beyond these figures, described in some detail in chapter two, *les bandits* also be connected to the *imbangala* Joseph Miller describes as key fodder for slaving raids along the central Atlantic coast.<sup>516</sup> *Les bandits* are also in category that is comprehensible to global observers and audiences. These figures match well with popular representations of what a child soldier in a place like Congo is like. The emerging genre of child soldier memoir and fiction, and activism like the Invisible Children initiative, are concerned with experiences similar to those *les bandits* would endure.<sup>517</sup> The Sierra Leonean combatants described in Danny Hoffman’s *War Machines* typify this framing: young people “made use of,” whose agency is located in using “war primarily as a violent way of fitting in today’s global economy.”<sup>518</sup> Their primary purpose is to facilitate the political and economic projects of elites. That *les bandits* are said to be “not of us” ultimately forecloses avenues of reintegration that revolve around community perceptions of what constitutes kin.<sup>519</sup>

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<sup>516</sup> See Iliffe, John. *A Modern History of Tanganyika*. Cambridge University Press, 1979, 64 (though Iliffe is himself quoting Aylward Shorter’s *Nyungu ya Mawe*) and Joseph Miller. *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830*. University of Wisconsin Press, 1996.

<sup>517</sup> Uzodinma Iweala, *Beasts of No Nation* (Hodder & Stoughton, 2015); Ishmael Beah, *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs Of A Boy Soldier* (Penguin Canada, 2013); Neil Abramson, *Soldier Child*, Documentary, 1998; *Invisible Children*, Documentary, 2006; Emmanuel Jal, *War Child: A Child Soldier’s Story* (St. Martin’s Press, 2009).

<sup>518</sup> Hoffman, Danny. *The War Machines: Young Men and Violence in Sierra Leone and Liberia*. Duke University Press, 2011, 133.

<sup>519</sup> Interview with “Enoch,” Oicha, Democratic Republic of Congo, June 12, 2015.

The second category of child soldier are *shege* (also *shégues*)—a name purportedly derived from Che Guevara, intended to evoke a nonconformist revolutionary spirit.<sup>520</sup> *Shege* are described by Bob White as “undereducated unemployed youth” and Johan Pottier as the mass of “Kinshasa’s disowned children.”<sup>521</sup> Filip de Boeck’s work frequently touches on these kinless youth, often as the targets of witchcraft accusations and other violence, who coalesce into gangs for protection and access to prestige and power.<sup>522</sup> Unlike other street children, Katrien Pype argues that *shege* are seen to possess no boundaries in terms of who they target and the levels of violence they are willing to perpetrate.<sup>523</sup> Penis stealing accusations and Pentecostal “child witch” exorcist movements often target the *shege*.<sup>524</sup> Seen as wild, parasitic, unproductive, and unmanageable, many Kinshais demand that the state remove *shege* from the city.

After periodic round ups these children are press-ganged into the FARDC, removing a public menace in Kinshasa and attempting to redirect their violence in the service of the government. The perception of engagement with witchcraft, violence, and machismo associated with *shege* follows them into the ranks of the army. Many in Beni view the *shege* with fear, disgust, and suspicion. *Shege* are construed as criminals: armed, given legal protection, and then

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<sup>520</sup> Faul, Michelle. “Mass Arrests in Congo; Homeless Children, Others Rounded up Accused of Protesting, Inciting Violence.” *Toronto Star*. November 14, 2006, sec. A.

<sup>521</sup> Pottier, Johan. “Understanding Human Insecurity in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo: The Relevance of Ethnography for Post-Conflict Reconstruction.” Departmental Bulletin Paper. Accessed December 21, 2015, P 76 and Bob White, “Listening Together, Thinking Out Loud: Popular Music and Political Consciousness in Congo-Zaire.” *MUSICultures* 41, no. 2 (May 22, 2015).

<sup>522</sup> See De Boeck’s sections in Boeck, Filip De, Marie-Françoise Plissart, and Jean-Pierre Jacquemin. *Kinshasa: Récits de la ville invisible*. Renaissance Du Livre, 2005 and in Trefon, Theodore. *Reinventing Order in the Congo: How People Respond to State Failure in Kinshasa*. Zed Books, 2004.

<sup>523</sup> Katrien Pype, “Fighting Boys, Strong Men and Gorillas: Notes on the Imagination of Masculinities in Kinshasa.” *Africa* 77, no. 02 (2007): 252.

<sup>524</sup> Deni Bechard. “‘On Va Tuer Les Demons’ (‘We Will Kill the Demons’).” *Foreign Policy*, March 21, 2014.

not paid by the state, let loose to fend for themselves—echoing Mobutu’s call for his troops to “live off the land” by pillaging communities they were sent to protect.<sup>525</sup> The *shege* are seen as agents of extraction and spectacular consumption—concerned only with their own immediate interests and needs, existing outside respectable forms of social reproduction. When my friend’s pregnant wife was accidentally shot and killed in her home during a neighborhood sweep by the FARDC, her murderer was said to be not a true soldier but a “drunk *shege*.”

The third category of young combatants form a loosely affiliated group of militias called *mai-mai*. *Les bandits* are interpreted similarly across local and global scales. *Shege* are contextually distinct to Congo but self-consciously bear markers of global gang and youth delinquency cultures. *Mai-mai*, if viewed as insurgents who use medicines, require the most contextualized markers and meanings. In Beni, *mai-mai* child soldiers are seen in a more ambivalent light than *les bandit* or *shege*. Rather than “child soldier” I use the circulating term *kadogo*—*little ones* in Swahili—for this group. The soft, almost paternal meanings associated with *kadogo* speaks to the ambivalence—affection, protectiveness, fear, and concern—tied up in understanding these “little ones.”

Where the immaturity of *les bandits* lends them to ready exploitation, and the *shege*’s unmoored youth is symptomatic of social breakdown, the *mai-mai* children derive their power—as argued in chapter two and four of this dissertation—from notions of purity that are associated with immaturity and mobilized in response to threats to the community. Their capacity to wield the *mai* is contingent, in part, on their age. Among contemporary veterans of *mai-mai* movement, echoing sentiments Henri expressed in chapter five, several informants reported that it was only the youngest participants in a *mai-mai* band were those with the keenest spiritual “sight,” able to

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<sup>525</sup> Young, Crawford, and Thomas Turner. *The Rise and Decline of the Zairian State*. Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985: 91.

discern from among the brush those leaves containing the raw power of the wild—comprising the core of the *mai* ointment.<sup>526</sup> As in 1964, these children, some as young as six, were giving the vocation of *daktari* (doctor) in the band. Though small, their work was foundational to social stability. Emma Wild-Wood argues that “the prime concern [of contemporary *mai-mai*] is the protection of their land from other groups.”<sup>527</sup>

So unlike other child warriors *kadogo* are often mobilized from within kin groups in order to protect society. As argued previously, this can include protecting a social group from internal threats of venal elders. Given that their claims are tied to the material foundations of social reproduction and accumulation, *kadogo* warriors often possess a much broader array of reintegration possibilities when they seek to return home. Many are described as protectors of their homes and families. They can be forgiven, even respected, for their violence when it is interpreted as self-sacrifice. During my time in Beni I witnessed three separate mass mobilizations of *mai* soldiers of all ages—though all would be considered young men and boys. These were for brief periods against specific threats, and all were welcomed back into the community after their actions were completed. This avenue of homecoming is not open in the same way to *les bandits* and *shege*. At the scale of daily life in Beni *mai-mai* are not foundationally thought of as children, but as warriors—by themselves and others. Former *kadogo* I spoke with, though wrestling with elements of trauma and regret, most often parsed their violence as loyalty, defense of home, and duty. Their violence was “classificatory” to use Derek

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<sup>526</sup> Interview with, Enoch, Joachim in June 2014 in Beni, and Packard, Randall M. *Chiefship and Cosmology: An Historical Study of Political Competition*. Indiana University Press, 1981 for discussion of wild power.

<sup>527</sup> Wild, Emma. “‘Is It Witchcraft? Is It Satan? It Is a Miracle.’ Mai-Mai Soldiers and Christian Concepts of Evil in North-East Congo.” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 28, no. 4 (1998): 450–67.

Peterson's frame—conducted for an “internal audience... by which insiders are sorted from outsiders and natives are distinguished from interlopers.”<sup>528</sup>

Tacking back to the sketch of legal history provided earlier: the operating definition of child soldier by UN agencies in eastern Congo does not allow for such gradations within the category. International law recognizes no “morally acceptable” or socially constitutive forms of child soldiering. All child combatants, whatever motivation or provenance, enter the protection regime of UNICEF upon demobilization. Chronologies and biology, not morality, is the foundational classificatory technique. Determining the age of demobilized soldiers to decide how to track their reintegration strategy evokes colonial doctors examining and sorting children destined for Niangara Penitentiary for moral re-education.

As UNICEF brings children out combat, they flatten locally meaningful categorical distinctions between young combatants. *Les bandit*, *shege*, and *kadogo* all become former child soldiers after passing through the UNICEF DDR regime. The default formulation, the global child soldier frame most akin to the *les bandit's* category, becomes the default. As individual and group trajectories are conflated, identities are transformed. In exchange for technical and financial aid, children are conscripted from militia groups into another politico-legal entity: the wildly unpopular para-political humanitarian regime at work in Congo under the auspices of MONUSCO. The long-term outcomes are not clear when a child goes through the DDR pipeline, purportedly equipped for vocation, counselled, and given a small sum of money.

Placed against highly suspicious local perceptions of MONUSCO as an anti-social consuming force described earlier, these demobilized child soldiers can be interpreted as objects of exchange to justify the aid dollars that support the MONUSCO apparatus. Whatever notions

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<sup>528</sup> Derek Peterson. “Violence and Political Advocacy in the Lost Counties, Western Uganda.” Unpublished essay.

members of the community might have about these children, it is worth briefly mentioning that former child combatants' themselves must also transition their own positionality, moving from variously constituted forms of warrior status subsumed into the single salient humanitarian category: victimized child through techniques of DDR.

## **Conclusion**

Protecting children and ushering them safely through the transition to adulthood is a foundational moral responsibility for adults across time and place. But the contours of this moral obligation are contingent, contested, and complex. In the field of eastern Congo where multiple, incompatible actors are engaged in “peace building” of various shades, the child soldier has become a profoundly dense, even overdetermined, object of moral disputation between groups of people for whom there is a very slim overlap in the vocabulary, practices, and values of child protection.

This paper argues for the “coequality” of agents of MONUSCO and members of Beni’s community.<sup>529</sup> It frames cannibal claims as a method used by the people of Beni to attempt to integrate all members of the community—UN and other development personnel included—into a sticky relational web whereby individual fates are tied to corporate success or failure, where obligation and gain are entwined. For political, economic, social and historical reasons the UN assiduously avoids such implication in the Beni milieu. This move dramatically weakens the UN’s claims to legitimacy, morality, and neutrality for many in the community.

While it is only heuristically useful to draw a distinction between “local” and “UN” ways of constructing the child soldier; such categories are more variegated and complex than I suggest

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<sup>529</sup> Fabian, Johannes. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. Columbia University Press, 2002.

here. Maintaining the heuristic, however, permits two conclusions to be drawn. First, public critique, such as claims of cannibalism, are used by local actors to firmly situate MONUSCO within the moral economy of Beni rather than in a global humanitarian frame. Second, the assiduous apolitically of UN personnel justifies alienating ways of living and speaking that comprise the efficacy of work being done by MONUSCO. This issue is particularly acute with relation to how child soldiers are conscripted into MONUSCO's DDR regimes.

Finally, it is clear that the enduring logic of *mai* medicine, present in Congo since at least the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, is still relevant and deployed today. The young in contemporary Congo maintain the ability to channel and harness powers from the wild. These movements both serve and challenge social order in domestic spaces of formal and family politics. *Mai* played an important role in all postcolonial conflicts in eastern Congo. From the Simba movement, to the 1996 rebellion of Laurent Kabila, a former Simba, to the "self-defense" *mai* units operating in Second Congo War, including those I encountered in Beni in 2003, to the violence plaguing Beni and environs today. The *mai* endures. This dissertation attempted to sketch out a broad and wide-ranging examination of this medicine and its roots. Nothing suggests that the *mai*, and the logics, discourses, and practices it draws upon, will not feature as centrally in Congo's 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **Chapter Eight: Conclusions**

This dissertation attempts three broad interventions. First, it explores the complexity and value of writing an ethnographic history of war in an active conflict zone. Second, it deploys novel methodological and analytical strategies to examine therapeutic insurgencies grounded on the violent labor of youth in decolonizing and postcolonial African states. Third, this study seeks to reorient some preponderant questions in scholarship concerning the role of children in violent conflict.

### **Complicating Fieldwork**

Late into the writing of this dissertation, the UN declared my field site to be among the world's worst crisis zones. On October 26, 2017 the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid (OCHA) "activated its highest level of emergency" for the Democratic Republic of Congo. The DRC was one of four countries enduring a "Level 3 Emergency" alongside Syria, Yemen, and Iraq. Increasingly violent conflict, systemic instability and political disorder, economic decline, endemic food insecurity, and mass displacement compelled the classification. The OCHA press release declaimed that "the number of people who do not have enough food to eat has surged by 30 percent this year to 7.7 million. The number of children suffering severe acute malnutrition stands at 1.9 million, exceeding those of Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan and Nigeria combined." The report's authors briefly gestured toward explanations for the crisis but focused instead on the



staggering scope of degradation and human suffering, framed within a largely de-politicized, ahistorical register of immediate want and overwhelming need.

With the emergency activation, the UN added its “largest ever funding appeal” for intervention in Congo. \$1.68 billion for 2018 was requested to address the emergent conditions—equivalent to 4.6 million dollars a day of spending. These claims were made at scales illegible to most people living in the “L3 Emergency” zone, but the impact of such bureaucratic reclassifications would matter considerably on the ground. The UN’s largest operational base in Congo, for instance, is in the city of Beni, where I lived with my family for three years.

Once considered an oasis of calm in a chaotic region, Human Rights Watch recently described Beni as a place where people “live in fear of the next attack and have all but lost hope that anyone can end the carnage.”<sup>530</sup> Even the UN, with all the resources at their disposal, seem unable to exert control. In November 2017, a shadowy rebel group attacked an advance base in Beni territory of the UN’s elite Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) and killed 14 Tanzanian peacekeepers. This was the largest single loss of UN peacekeeper lives in 25 years.<sup>531</sup> In the face of attacks against the hardest of targets in the region, anxiety permeates the city. Who is safe if not the Force Intervention Brigade? Was this evidence of the “long arms” but “weak fingers” of the UN, to appropriate Frederick Cooper’s description of empire?<sup>532</sup>

As the security situation deteriorated I found myself reevaluating the politics of this dissertation project. My research attracted interest I did not anticipate. Security officers affiliated

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<sup>530</sup> Ida Sawyer “DR Congo: Protect Civilians in Beni from Attack,” Human Rights Watch, October 7, 2016.

<sup>531</sup> “UN Peacekeepers Honour 14 Troops Killed in DRC,” News24, December 11, 2017, <https://www.news24.com/Africa/News/un-peacekeepers-honour-14-troops-killed-in-drc-20171211>.

<sup>532</sup> Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (University of California Press, 2005).

with international NGOs sought me out for analysis of the instability. Journalists approached me for soundbites. A member of a highly influential international research group requested a meeting to talk through the conflict. I demurred. Soon I was actively avoiding such interactions. I felt a strange sense of responsibility to be silent. Was my project meant to provide proscriptive counsel, in service of international organizations with intentions I did not fully understand or share? Was I being enlisted in what James Ferguson might call a development “structure of knowledge” to be leveraged for various interventions?<sup>533</sup> Could my knowledge production unwittingly serve as a kind of “ethnographic intelligence” service for official and private security apparatuses?<sup>534</sup> Is it possible that interpreting *mai* as a framework for recurrent therapeutic insurgency affect contemporary security interventions in eastern Congo? I began to worry that my analysis would somehow impact directly the subjects I studied in ways I could not anticipate or control. These possibilities troubled me. Questions that I wrestle with now barely registered as possible when I began my field work.

When I first moved to Beni for research in September 2013 the city was a sleepy town, best known as a coffee processing hub and zone of refuge for displaced people in times of volatility. Phone, internet, and mail service were inactive when we first arrived. M23 rebels destroyed the regional communications hub. Beni itself, however, was calm. The first year in the city was characterized by signs of growth and the reconstruction of critical infrastructure. In October 2014, however, unknown forces launched a series of massacres against subsistence farming families within the city’s hinterland. The death toll climbed inexorably, relentlessly.

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<sup>533</sup> James Ferguson, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order* (Duke University Press, 2006).

<sup>534</sup> Danny Hoffman, *The War Machines: Young Men and Violence in Sierra Leone and Liberia* (Duke University Press, 2011) p 259.

Over a thousand civilians were brutally murdered. Nearly 200,000 people were displaced by the violence. No one seemed able to stop, or even understand, the massacres.<sup>535</sup> The city was gripped by fear, mistrust and violence.

As tensions rose, townspeople I found universally warm and welcoming turned on someone accused of speaking “Kinyarwanda” and stoned and burned him alive in the middle of the day in the main commercial center.<sup>536</sup> Not knowing Swahili or speaking with a strange accent could evoke deadly mob violence. Polyvalent xenophobia shook the city. Unknown agents started launching mortars at random into the city at night. One fell on a home and killed an entire family asleep in bed. An IED exploded on a main residential road near our home. Things improved for a time and then grew worse again. Our local host institution ordered the evacuation of my family and I three separate times after October 2014.

At times the violence felt distant, almost surreal. National political crises were something of a relief, comfortably remote, suitable for conjecture and consideration. At other times the chaos felt so intimate it overwhelmed my ability to attempt any kind of analytical objectivity. One such moment occurred two days after UN OCHA’s “L3 Emergency” press release was published.

It was early afternoon. I was riding a motorcycle taxi back to my home from an interview when the clouds suddenly loosed a thick slate of rain on the city. I was carrying a laptop with me, containing this dissertation, and asked the *motard* to pull over so we could seek shelter. The

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<sup>535</sup> Perhaps the best study of this period of violence, the Congo Research Group’s “Mass Killings in Beni Territory: Political Violence, Cover Ups, and Cooptation” published in September 2017 suggested possible perpetrators but was largely inconclusive. The CRG lays the blame at the feet of a complex array of actors including ex-APC, ex-M23, local “ethnic militias” especially of the Vuba, the ADF, various “Kinyarwanda speakers” within the army, and other FARDC units under Gen. Munhindo Akili Mundos. Analysis including such a disparate aggregation of actors strikes me as of limited utility and clarity.

<sup>536</sup> Chloé Lauvergner, “Deadly Mob Justice for a Suspected Rebel in North Kivu,” *France 24*, November 2, 2014. A close friend of mine who witnessed the killing verified the reportage claiming two individuals ate the victim’s flesh after the killing.

driver and I ducked into one of the ubiquitous *mini-food* roadside cafés specializing in *kalangiti*: a typical lunch of beans, plantain and cabbage, costing 700 Congo *franc*.<sup>537</sup> We squeezed onto an already crowded wooden bench to wait out the deluge. The rain hammered violently on the tin roof.

We, a bedraggled group of interrupted travelers, stared blankly at each in the deafening roar. We watched as chunks of red earth, weakened in the torrent, crumbled from eroded embankments. All manner of detritus including plastic bags and discarded sleeves of Top Vin, a local alcohol, were caught up in gushing threads of rainwater. All was swept into the surging Muniyabelu River that bisects Beni from east to west, coursing a few meters from our refuge.

The interminable din took a more restrained cadence. Movement resumed in Beni. Hundreds of people walked back onto the road to take up their business and plans. I joined the throng. Within a few moments, however, the deep thrum of thunder cut the air once again. I sighed, imagining further delays in my journey home. But quickly it became clear this was not thunder but something more mechanistic and unnatural. The rhythm was imperfect and imprecise but continual. It was also much too loud to be thunder.

Suddenly the physically perceptible low frequencies of heavy artillery explosions hit. The sounds felt almost as though they were emerging from within my own body. After an initial disorientation, I realized the source of the furor was very near my home. My family was there.

The streets emptied again, people ducking into the same cafés and shelters they left moments earlier. This time cold fear replaced boredom and resignation. Everyone speculated as to the proximity and source of fighting. I felt sick with worry for my family. No movement on the street meant I could not hail a motorcycle taxi to take me home. Even if I could convince

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<sup>537</sup> Currently about \$.045.

someone to take me, we might well drive directly into a battle. What good would that do my family?

An hour passed interminably. The sounds of war resounded. But as the rain, so too the booms and cracks slowed. Eventually calm returned. Tentative movement began again. I hailed the first motorcycle taxi I found on the road and went home. My family were deeply shaken but physically well. As anxiety subsided relief came, and along with it a kind of elation. We were safe. Someone stopped an invading force that may have been trying to take the city. We still do not know who the attackers were. But it was soon clear who held the line against the assailants, preventing them from entering the town.

“Those boys were the only ones to protect us” my friend Kitambala Georges, the director of a local security firm, told me in the hours after the attack. “Those *mai-mai*.” A UN battalion was only two kilometers away but did not respond. The Congolese national army, massively deployed in the town, took forty-five minutes to arrive at a site within the city limits. By the time they arrived the rebels were already retreating into the forest.

We shook our heads at the impotence of the massive formal security apparatus and the efficacy of filthy boys with sticks and shrubs facing down the heaviest artillery barrage I experienced during my years in Congo. I felt an instinctive surge of appreciation toward the *mai-mai*. A group I spent years struggling to interpret now seemed to have protected my family from potential harm, albeit unintentionally. Kitambala Georges pointed in the direction of the recent fighting and asked, “What would we do without them? How would we survive?” I made no reply.

What to make of this account? Is this data or evidence? If so, what kind? Or is this simply local color, little more than anecdote, establishing conflict research *bona fides*? What analytical value justifies such memory work?

This account functions partly as a disclaimer. It is important to acknowledge that experiences like this recurred during the field work and writing of this dissertation. It would be disingenuous to ignore the complex conditions underlying the production of this project. My analysis, methods, and focus were inflected—in ways I am simultaneously aware of and do not comprehend—by these experiences. It is logistically, psychologically, analytically, and emotionally relevant that this project was generated within a zone of active conflict. One contends with complex forces and influences that affect the entire work, not just elements that were gathered or interpreted in “the field.”

Words read on a page in a climate-controlled reading room in a Brussels archive sit awkwardly against the sickening zip and crunch of arms in Beni. Managing pressing concerns over ominous possible futures for oneself and loved ones becomes a quotidian reality—a quiet hum continually running in the background of acts like the consolidation of a bibliography. Frictions and incommensurabilities emerge across sources and evidence as visceral moments of fear and confusion seek to overwhelm the relevance of structural phenomena across scales and human experience.<sup>538</sup> The process is both difficult and rich. Placing disparate forms of evidence and experience in the same field yields both incoherence and insight.

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<sup>538</sup> Useful here is the idea of the capacity of being conscious of the present as a “space of experience” from Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (Columbia University Press, 1985). This mode of being is placed against the “horizon of expectation,” that is one’s approach toward future possibility. These stances toward and within the social construction of time form the conditions of possibility for any political imaginary.

It is also worth noting that *mai-mai* discourses and practices, with genealogies wending deeply into the precolonial, were sharply relevant and urgent in eastern Congo as I wrote the dissertation. As recounted above, the “boys” that “saved us” explicitly placed themselves within the history of *mai*, harkening to antecedent movements and participating in its reinventions. While Jason Stearns once described *mai-mai* as “ramshackle” movements “of little military threat” to more professional militias in the Congo Wars, the situation is much different in Beni territory today.<sup>539</sup> Placing *mai-mai* movements at the center of ongoing instability is a theme in contemporary scholarship and journalism on war in eastern Congo.<sup>540</sup> So too vernacular language media, such as the popular Kinande-language *Nindi* film, explore the *mai-mai* mythos and celebrate its impact.<sup>541</sup> International security experts focus on the *mai-mai* as agents of chaos and instability. The humanitarian alert messaging system, INSO, reported *mai-mai* involvement in over sixty percent of the conflicts reported in North Kivu in the last three months.<sup>542</sup>

How do we approach the methodical and analytical challenges and possibilities of doing an ethnography of war during a time of intense conflict? One line of scholarship suggests viewing ethnography in conflict zones in a fundamentally pragmatic way, arguing that a

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<sup>539</sup> Jason K. Stearns, *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa* (PublicAffairs, 2011) p 367.

<sup>540</sup> Derek Bishton, “Viewfinder: Mai-Mai Militia Training, Democratic Republic of Congo,” *The Daily Telegraph*, August 5, 2005, sec. Culture; Jeffrey Gettleman, “Mai Mai Fighters Third Piece in Congo’s Violent Puzzle,” *The New York Times*, November 21, 2008, sec. International / Africa; Jill Trenholm et al., “Constructing Soldiers from Boys in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo,” *Men and Masculinities* 16, no. 2 (June 1, 2013): 203–27; Emma Wild, “‘Is It Witchcraft? Is It Satan? It Is a Miracle.’ Mai-Mai Soldiers and Christian Concepts of Evil in North-East Congo,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 28, no. 4 (1998): 450–467; Jocelyn Kelly, “Rape in War: Motives of Militia in DRC,” Report, June 16, 2010.; Luca Jourdan, “Mayi-Mayi: Young Rebels in Kivu, DRC,” *Africa Development* 36, no. 3–4 (2011): 89–112; Koen Vlassenroot and Frank Van Acker, “War as Exit from Exclusion? The Formation of Mayi-Mayi Militias in Eastern Congo,” *Afrika Focus* 17, no. 1 (2001): 2.

<sup>541</sup> Kambale Syayighanza, *Nindi?* (La Place Image Pro, Butembo, 2013).

<sup>542</sup> INSO email alerts. 17 of 26 alerts reported *mai-mai* involvement.

methodological imperative is self-preservation.<sup>543</sup> This approach acknowledges that the tension and fear of these contexts produces a particular methodological “mood,” likely imperceptible to the researcher.<sup>544</sup> Surely, however, survival alone does not justify the risks of such research. One might, as Christopher Kovats-Bernat, argue that enduring dangerous field work yields evidentiary rewards. Positions of proximity to conflict, in this view, make possible the perspective that “the bullet fired, the rock thrown, and the machete swung are all data insofar as they play a role in the construction of a culture of violence.”<sup>545</sup>

There must be limits, however, to what constitutes data when we talk about violence. Must all acts of harm find a functionalistic link to culture? Is data a worthy enough object to endure insecurity—is it, in fact, the only material one can gather? I share Julie Livingston and Zoë Wool’s counter that “ethnography, a mode of writing-dwelling that is in itself inherently, awkwardly social, is particularly well suited to [capturing loss and brokenness], especially when it grounds itself in the haze, even the incomprehensibility, of experience.”<sup>546</sup> The goal of this dissertation is not to “rationalize violence,” but rather to acknowledge both its fundamental slipperiness as a subject of inquiry and its conceptual power as a tool for social transformation

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<sup>543</sup> J. Christopher Kovats-Bernat, “Negotiating Dangerous Fields: Pragmatic Strategies for Fieldwork Amid Violence and Terror,” *American Anthropologist*, New Series, 104, no. 1 (March 1, 2002): 208–22; Anna Hedlund, “Doing Fieldwork with Perpetrators in a Military Camp: The Routines of Everyday Violence in the Eastern Congo” (*The Loose Ends of Fieldwork*, Copenhagen, 2013); Nancy Howell, *Surviving Fieldwork: A Report of the Advisory Panel on Health and Safety in Fieldwork*, *American Anthropological Association* (American Anthropological Assn, 1990); Raymond M. Lee, *Dangerous Fieldwork* (Sage Publications, 1995); Carolyn Nordstrom and Antonius C. G. M. Robben, *Fieldwork Under Fire: Contemporary Studies of Violence and Culture* (University of California Press, 1995); Jeffrey Sluka, “Participant Observation in Violent Social Contexts,” *Human Organization* 49, no. 2 (1990): 114–126.

<sup>544</sup> Nordstrom and Robben, *Fieldwork Under Fire*, p 3.

<sup>545</sup> Kovats-Bernat, “Negotiating Dangerous Fields.”

<sup>546</sup> Zoë H. Wool and Julie Livingston, *Collateral Afterworlds: Sociality Besides Redemption* (Duke University Press, 2017). p 10.



and regulation.<sup>547</sup> The fired bullet, like the word uttered, contains the potential to both amplify and undermine other forms of disputation. Bringing the word and sword together in a single analytical field follows Paul Richard's insistence that conflict has been too readily disciplinarily "quarantined" to "security studies." The value of interdisciplinary approaches, like this dissertation, is in the attempt to at once acknowledge, and methodologically and conceptually undermine, the "special status" of violence among other social phenomena.<sup>548</sup> This project attempted to place violence alongside an array of other human interactions and activities even when, or perhaps particularly when, their connections were not obvious. Linking missionary catechisms and *mai* yields insights impossible when approached in isolation.

The primary gains of attempting to write ethnographic history in a war zone come not from capturing the data that spill forth from the barrel of a gun, but rather being proximate to the deployment of vernacular frameworks used to interpret such events. How do interlocutors use language, history, story, religion, and community to navigate and explain violent phenomena? How and when do other forms of thought and action interface with violence? The irruptive experiences of conflict provide an urgency and shared commitment to such conversations. Being in place allows a researcher to, at least, listen to and witness such disputation. Debates, for instance, about generational conflict take on a sharp edge when the stakes are immediate and real—when youth surround the city with violent intentions. Fundamentally proximity allows participation in the meaning-making work that such anxieties produce.

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<sup>547</sup> Nordstrom and Robben, *Fieldwork Under Fire*, p 10. Nordstrom and Robben borrow the notion of the "slipperiness" of conceptualizing violence from Michael Taussig.

<sup>548</sup> Paul Richards, *No Peace, No War: An Anthropology of Contemporary Armed Conflicts* (Ohio University Press, 2005).

The scalar, formal, and methodological experiments attempted in this dissertation are, unfortunately, unusual in studies of conflict, where culture is too often seen as the progenitor of violence rather than the well of meaning from which all, victim and perpetrator, draw language and interpretative frameworks.

### **Neoliberal Africa and Post-colonial Conflict**

Danny Hoffman's *War Machines* is an incisive study of violent youth movements in neoliberal Africa. His framework offers a compelling alternative approach to the one taken in this dissertation. Where this study focuses on sub-national forces, Hoffman's interest is in the "relations, practices, and modes of operating that emerge to contest the 'interiorizing' practices of the modern state" in Sierra Leone. Violence is cast primarily as a category of "work:" young men the pool of available labor. Hoffman borrows the notion of the "war machine" from Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, anchoring his analysis on their formulation that "each time there is an operation against the State— insubordination, rioting, guerrilla warfare, or revolution as act—it can be said that a war machine has revived."<sup>549</sup>

Hoffman's overriding interest is in "the exteriority of the state" and its attempts to interiorize dissident forces. Hoffman rejects the notion of the state as a "historical formation" but rather treats it as a "condition," a "hierarchical mode of organizing power that appears as a tendency or impulse throughout history."<sup>550</sup> Statist powers are fundamentally committed to the production and management of "structures and codes, with stable identities...[operating within]

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<sup>549</sup> Danny Hoffman, *The War Machines: Young Men and Violence in Sierra Leone and Liberia* (Duke University Press, 2011) p 4.

<sup>550</sup> Hoffman, *War Machines*, p 7.

the space of bureaucracy, obsessed with charting its territory through cartography, conducting censuses, plotting the normal course of affairs, fixated on taxation and protocol.” The war machine violently emerges to offer a challenge to these operations and actions.

While Hoffman offers a useful framework for interpreting youthful rebellion in neoliberal Africa, his decision to use the state to set the scale of analysis obfuscates dynamics relevant to the figures within the “war machine.” In foregrounding stories like Henri’s, this dissertation complicates such state-centric framings. While not treating Henri’s experiences as typical this dissertation nonetheless demonstrates how dynamics of “interiorization” were neither legible nor resonant to figures engaging the Simba rebellion in 1964. If, as I argue, the logic of *mai*, its durable discourses and practices, persist to this day, then so too do aspects of its animating frameworks. *Mai* did not emerge to counter the state. It was leveraged to revivify failing moral order—to reassert the demands of responsibility from venal elites. The state in Congo did not seek to interiorize these forces: when the government gained the upper hand against the Simba in late 1964, they sought simply to erase the movement through massacre rather than capture dissident youth. In following Mbembe’s formulation that the modern state in Africa seeks the “generalized instrumentalization of human existence and the material destruction of human bodies and populations” Hoffman’s focus on state again elides other, powerful non-state structures of authority and maturity that mark most Africans’ experiences of power and possibility.<sup>551</sup>

Eastern Congo’s recent *mai-mai* movements, in light of the deeper history drawing on notions of therapeutic insurgency—violent movements anchored by charms and war medicines—charted in earlier chapters, require an alternative framework to Hoffman’s approach. The core

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<sup>551</sup> Hoffman, *War Machines*, p 17.

concern is not how a “grassroots civil defense militia is transformed into a mercenary army,” but rather why and how such movements—like *Anioto* and *ruga-ruga* before it—proved exceeding difficult, even impossible, for the state to coopt and control. History suggests that the authority of the medicine exceeded the interiorizing capacities both the state and local elites. The renewing force of the *mai* was to be leveraged against wayward elder kin and figures misappropriating responsibility in the economy, church, and customary authority. The *mai* itself regulated trust and authority. Attempting to locate tactical objectives and articulating strategy beyond eliminating social evil might overstretch what evidence exists.<sup>552</sup>

*Mai-mai* militia movements in eastern Congo thus cannot be interpreted as exemplars of the war machine which Hoffman argues is characterized by “solely exterior relations. A war machine’s properties are contingent and flexible... not confined to transit between fixed points or along given routes.” *Mai*, by contrast demanded adherence to rigid, inviolable rules, strict codes of behavior, including precise regulations about targeting, consumption, bodily management, authority, and language. *Mai* was not invoked through improvisation, even if its codes were continually violated.

While on the surface *mai-mai* movements in contemporary eastern Congo might bear resemblance to movements like the ones Hoffman studies in Sierra Leone, their logics are radically different, even antithetical. *Mai-mai*’s belligerent exteriority to the state and state-like entities demands its own analytical and scalar approaches. Fundamentally, interpreting *mai-mai* requires analysis grounded in sub-national scales. The most relevant primary relations are not with or against the state, or state-like entities, but follow the sinews of kith and kin. Strained forms of reciprocity frame the foundational questions, not tactics of governmentality. This

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<sup>552</sup> Kasper Hoffmann, “The Ethics of Child-Soldiering in the Congo,” *Young* 18, no. 3 (August 1, 2010): 339–58.

dissertation interprets *mai-mai* as existentially committed to upholding and revivifying the moral authority of hierarchy and ultimately bolstering the power of responsible elders, albeit through a path of violence. It is always and at once in and out of what Hoffman calls the “impulse” toward hierarchy. *Ma- mai* is defined by its interstitial status.

### **Childhood studies**

Beyond questions of scale, this dissertation also suggests alternative approaches to framing the core subjects of inquiry: violent young people. This is most relevant in providing new analytical itineraries for scholars exploring child soldiering. Much of this body of scholarship focuses on the question of “What is a child?” The question is urgent as it addresses the fundamental issue of responsibility for violence. David Rosen, in his *Armies of the Young: Child Soldiers in War and Terrorism*, writes “thousands of children and youth today are caught up in armed warfare and are committing horrible crimes. How should we see them? As innocent victims of political circumstances who should be protected and forgiven? Or as moral agents who should be held responsible for their actions?”<sup>553</sup> This dyad, child soldiers are either victims or criminals, ultimately reduces the range of possibilities for analysis. Much ink is spilled wrestling with questions of biology, sociology, and capacity, where I argue more can be gleaned by thinking first with the question of opportunity.

The more useful, but far less frequently deployed question should be “Why a child?” Even if we can establish a definitive category of “childhood” in a given context, one is still left

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<sup>553</sup> David M. Rosen, *Armies of the Young: Child Soldiers in War and Terrorism*, Rutgers Series in Childhood Studies, p 155. This particular quote is pulled out by Barbara Harrell-Bond in her review of *Children and Youth on the Front line: Ethnography, Armed Conflict and Displacement* by Jo Byden and Joane de Beery, Berghan Books, 2004.

with the essential issue of *why* that particular category of person was mobilized for conflict. This line of inquiry demands that scholars consider the unique constellation of cultural, social, and political dynamics that would make children attractive candidates to become warriors. It refocuses attention upon complex issues of power and opportunity, rather than global/universal frameworks of jurisprudence and culpability.

In most scholarship on child soldiering the reasons for the deployment of children in conflict are imagined to be obvious. If victims, children are pawns of the powerful. If criminals, children are the dangerous byproducts of social collapse. Alternative possibilities, such as imagining children as agents of renewal or protection, are foreclosed. If adjudicating culpability is the goal, then alternative frameworks are potentially morally dubious to consider—they present the possibility of suggesting children may exist somewhere between or beyond the bounds of culpability and criminality. While the questions of victimization and perpetration are worth consideration, other possible paths to understanding why the young make war are also important and potentially fruitful to consider.

Some scholars examining these dynamics in eastern Congo are beginning to address such lines of inquiry. Kaspar Hoffman's work explores the ethics of *mai-mai* child soldiering in eastern Congo. Hoffman's approach is broad. His formulations bears echoes of Quetelet's social thought when he writes that prototypical *mai-mai* is "the 'uneducated young male,' a person who, by reason of a causal chain, carries a particular high index of danger; he might be a 'psychopath', but he does not need to be."<sup>554</sup> Hoffman's exploration is temporally shallow, he

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<sup>554</sup> Kaspar Hoffmann, "The Ethics of Child-Soldiering in the Congo," *Young* 18, no. 3 (August 1, 2010): p 347.

traces the roots of child soldiering in eastern Congo to 1997.<sup>555</sup> While he seeks to identify children's reasons for engagement in the movement, he ultimately finds motivations to be incoherent. The child soldier, in his work, is ultimately a confused victim of a complex context. He argues that "the subjectivity of the *kadogo* was forged in a piecemeal manner by often contradictory moralities, rationalities and practices."<sup>556</sup> There is no "project" behind *mai-mai*, just confused youth.

This dissertation argues that the perception that child soldiers possess "piecemeal" identities is an artifact of insufficiently pursuing the "why a child" question in this context. Indeed, it seems clear that one reason analysis is too diffuse is due to conflating all manner of child warrior in eastern Congo together. It speaks to an insufficient attempt to locate the categories of experience at work in the region. The disaggregated modes of violent childhood offered in chapter seven of this dissertation suggest that there is are depths and complexities within youth violence yet unplumbed in other research.<sup>557</sup>

In general, seeking integration and lines of intentionality and continuity within the logic and practices of the *mai* links young warriors to deep wells of meaning, history, and durable language. Far from "piecemeal," these child soldiers strive to be integrated individuals, finding shared meaning and practices around the power of a war medicine. As one of Hoffman's own sources says: "No one called me into the *mai mai*. We left our work, we went into the bush. Into

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<sup>555</sup> Hoffmann, "Ethics of Child-Soldiering," p 354.

<sup>556</sup> Hoffmann, "Ethics of Child Soldiering," p 354.

<sup>557</sup> There are examples of a careful attention to the diversity of youth violence such as the section on child witches in Filip De Boeck, Marie-Françoise Plissart, and Jean-Pierre Jacquemin, *Kinshasa: Récits de la ville invisible* (Renaissance Du Livre, 2005), but these do not provide easy avenues for interpreting non-urban violent youth.

the park, following along the Semliki River.”<sup>558</sup> In 1964, as now, adult figures struggled to exert control and establish authority within *mai-mai* bands. This is evidence of a powerful alternative organizing logic at work beyond individual charisma or gerontocratic authority.

When placed in a lineage of legal and development-driven interventions child soldiers in Congo strain to emerge clearly within social science literature. Straying from analyses grounded within such global social and legal norms animates this dissertation's line of inquiry. I argue that *mai-mai* child soldiers participate, albeit incompletely and sometimes coercively, within deep norms of power, violence, disease and medicine in communities in eastern Congo. Exploring culpability takes a new valence: the focus is on violations of the *mai's* *règlements* and not UN statutes. Failure of responsibility is the crime which *mai-mai* avoid, both in terms of social obligation and accountability to the strictures of the *mai* itself.

In short, this study imagines children engaged within the *mai-mai* not primarily as victims, nor perpetrators, nor caught in the machinery of war, but as figures whose immaturity affords particular opportunities for access to power. Scholars studying violent childhoods in places like eastern Congo must look not just to etic categorizations of childhood and conflict but to those incompatible, borderline incoherent notions of the child that yield rich analytical and interpretive possibilities. I argue here that *mai* is such a medicine predicated on the power of an emic category of action that enables us to reframe childhood violence in Congo.

## Scale and Sources

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<sup>558</sup> “Crumbling Congo – the Making of a Humanitarian Emergency,” IRIN, December 26, 2017.



This dissertation sought to be attentive to scale, genre and form. One goal was to link diverse and sometimes unconventional sources. The study sought to include complicating experiences and forms of evidence that challenged its own arguments. To further evade totalizing frameworks, it makes unexpected moves. Pulling from disparate sources: this study examines Belgian demographers, epic folk tales, kingship ethnography, and security archives to frame the role of children of combat in Congo's 20<sup>th</sup> century through today. To work against the metanarrative tendencies of historical argument this dissertation moved into the most intimate scales of life history to run counter to the broader moves of the project.

This study attempted a wide focus incorporating disparate dynamics such as the deployment of war medicines, practices of baptism, the creative work of writers working in martyrdom registers, and processes of class and ethnicity formation. These moves sought to complicate the possibilities of settling in at a single scale and opened up a variety of methodological opportunities. Microhistory, for instance, helped locate space for individual experiences against moments when “sociality fails to redeem experiences of injury, vulnerability, and loss” across a lifespan.<sup>559</sup> The rewards of attempting to hold phenomena together while moving across form, method, and—especially—scale, are many. It is also necessary for this type of study. When faced with something as overwhelming as violence by children and against children on a mass scale the temptation is to pull out to the broad view for clarity, perspective, and even emotional space. But if my experience of attempting to conduct ethnographic and historical research is any guide, the rewards and possibilities of leaning closer to these stories are plethora. The goal is not narrower but rather deeper histories. The focus is not on individual lives but the experience of living and creating possible futures in complex times and violent places. It

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<sup>559</sup> Zoë H. Wool and Julie Livingston, *Collateral Afterworlds: Sociality Besides Redemption* (Duke University Press, 2017) p 2.

is about locating the outer bounds of social phenomena as much as defining what belongs on the inside.

### **A Fragment**

I close with a memory that resides within “the haze, even the incomprehensibility, of experience” and memory.<sup>560</sup> It is late October, 2017. I do not know this at the time, but it is one of my last days in Beni before I am evacuated again. I am on my way to the market. Hailing a motorcycle taxi with an upward twitch of my chin, I slip onto the seat behind a *motard* driving a battered bike. He greets me in a friendly way but pulls his sleeve down over his forearm when he notices me examining the telltale cicatrized scars of where the *mai* was once administered to him. He seems to be weighing in his mind whether I could identify such markings or not. We chat in Swahili for a time. He changes the subject abruptly to tell me that the *mai-mai* are misunderstood. They are protectors of the population, not *les bandits*. I do not respond quickly so he kicks the engine into life and pulls the throttle hard so the whirr of the engine drowns out further conversation. Our bodies are pressed together as the city races by. We are strangers but bound, for a moment, in a kind of embrace. The Beni that we pass through writhes, in one view, in a stew of violence and fear. Market prices are rising and people, already among the poorest on earth, struggle to survive. Tension is everywhere. As shops and people blur past, they form indeterminate swaths of color and shape, and the strains of music fill the air. In motion another city emerges. There is life and loveliness here too. The mix of pain and beauty is hard to hold together. But nonetheless there it is, and there it will be.

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<sup>560</sup> Zoë H. Wool and Julie Livingston, *Collateral Afterworlds: Sociality Besides Redemption* (Duke University Press, 2017). p 10.

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## Interviews Conducted

### In Uganda

Misaka M. Saliboko  
 Bathulumayo Kasirako  
 Nyesio Tembo Kibuya  
 Kabugho Ditoroza  
 Aloni Mubughe  
 Kibahimbandi Jockim  
 Bwambale Yolamu Mutsumbiri  
 Kabuke Petero  
 Hon. Ndanibireki G. Mulemba  
 Tito Kiiti

Kibingo Uziah Wamzabalere  
Mary Masereka  
Miria Kambere  
Mbambu Jene  
Masika Jrumira  
Ithung Roda  
Jene Ryamira  
Zeresi Kahalhambahu  
Idiredo Kasiraho  
Kabugho Yiyire  
Kisembo Mesi  
Balyana Azalia  
Mudaki William  
Musoki Gladys  
Mukirane Earnest  
Mbusa Jackson  
Muhindo Yolam  
Muhindo William  
Masereka Apollo  
Bwambale Ndereya  
Kamabu Yonasani  
Baluku Dewa Mwsema  
Baluku Bella  
Yeremiya Muhindo Maghezi  
Masika Ganeya  
Ithungu Pilisila  
Kakule Isasi wa Kikama  
Kambale Kyamukundulha  
Kambale Isaya  
Kule Kilema  
Masereka Sylvestre  
Byensi Patrick  
Thembo Lebu

*In Congo*

Anyesi Kahindo  
Erasto Kambale  
Mashauri Lusenge Deo  
Mbale Israel  
François Muhindo  
Mumbere Gustave  
Shafiko Etulu  
Mumbere Thomas  
Kinyata Kasereka,  
Lwanzo Katuka

Kahindo Pierre  
Kambale Syayighanza  
Vikatsira Kalalahire  
Paluku Katsavu  
Paluku Makasi Mremba  
Pilo Ndianabo Fidele  
Paluku Makasi Mremba  
Muhindo Matufali François  
Obadiah Mumbere  
Injilisti Paulo  
Kitambala Kasereka  
Kasereka Bolingo  
Ana Kasali  
Mbusa Manasee  
Kavira Manasee  
Andreas Nikoleidas  
Kaserka Thierry Mubenze  
Kasereka Kambale  
Kistali Muyayalo  
Aniesi Kahindo  
Kinyata Kasereka  
Kahi Kambale  
Papa “Yuma”  
Deo gratias Mumbere  
Paluku Mwasema